

A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FLIPSIDE OF SERIOUS CULTURE

GOING BOING

\$3.95 number 12

R.U. Sirius' Guide to
the Alternative
Seventies

William Gibson
Interview

Rick Linklater's
Dazed and Confused

Merciless Pranking



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Why You (really) Must Subscribe

The gentleman shown at right is suffering from "Acquired Microcephalism," which, in plain terms, means that his brain has shrunk. Why? He forgot to subscribe to *boING boING*.

From our very first issue, we've used every trick in the book to get readers to subscribe to *boING boING*. We've tried to scare, threaten, flatter, trick, humiliate, and bribe them into forking over money for a subscription. Most of the time our attempts have worked, but a few readers have steadfastly refused to sign up. This special edition of "Why You Must Subscribe" is addressed to these stubborn individuals. (If you are already a subscriber, you may skip this page and begin reading the magazine.)

Now, for you "nonsubs" — We're surprised that you're cool enough to read *boING boING*, yet pig-headed enough not to give us a few miserable greenbacks in exchange for four fabulous issues of what has been called "the greatest literary and artistic achievement of the millennium," by Eduardo Snodgrass, famous cultural critic and compulsive masturbator. (He asked us not to write the masturbating part, but he too, refuses to subscribe, believing that he should be on the "comp sub list," so we want to embarrass him). We have a name for you non-subscribers: "Freddy Freeloaders." And soon, we'll be calling you "Tiny Brained Freddy Freeloaders."

Confused? We'll bet you are. Read on.

We print 15,000 copies of *boING boING* every issue, but only 2,000 are sent to our beloved subscribers. The rest of the print run gets thrown on foul-smelling trucks operated by careless speed freak drivers who damage many of the boxes when they swerve to miss hallucinations. Guess who gets to pay for the damaged copies? We do. If we tried to make the drivers pay, they'd stab us with shivs, or other crudely-fashioned weapons hidden in their Dingo boots. So we end up having to pay for the spoiled inventory ourselves.

The undamaged copies are dropped off at the distributors. Let me tell you about our distributors: They are all card-carrying members of the U.S. Mafia, and they *never* pay us. Their crooked lawyers sent us 12-page contracts with lots of fancy terms, which, when translated into English, say: "The distributor never has to pay *boING boING* a single penny." Is this fair? I guess it is, since we signed the papers. But we don't like it, because it hurts our cute little business.

Ha!" you say. "I don't care. I'd rather spend \$3.95 and get one copy of *boING boING* when I see it on the newsstand, rather than pay you \$14 and wait for four issues. I know that you'll continue to masochistically publish the magazine, no matter how much money you lose. In fact, I enjoy watching you suffer."

And this is where we deliver our knockout blow to your inflated ego, my friend. The party's over. No more charity work; we're sick of it. From now on, if you want *boING boING*, you **MUST** subscribe. We are no longer going to "sell" *boING boING* to distributors. From this day forward, *boING boING* will be available by subscription only.

Yes, we know this is a drag for you. But after you subscribe, just imagine how your coolness index will shoot up among your microcephalic friends when they realize that you were hip enough to keep your brain fed. Subscribe today! **X**

Dear *boING boING*: I still have enough of a brain left to realize that I'd better act fast and subscribe. I can't wait to see the looks of dull shock on my little-brained pals when they see how smart I am.

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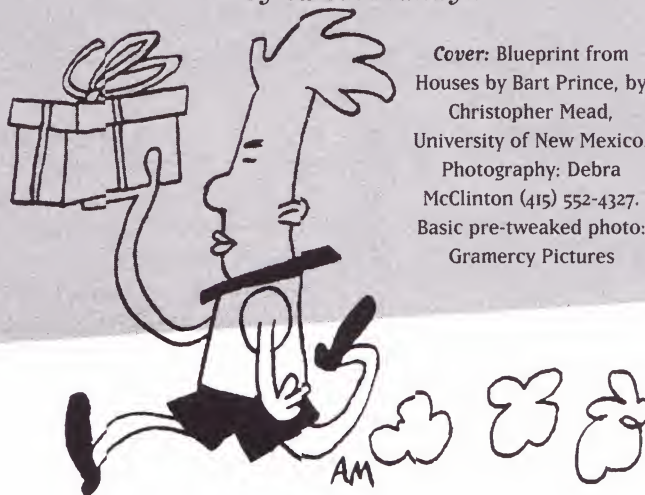
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Cover: Blueprint from Houses by Bart Prince, by Christopher Mead, University of New Mexico.
Photography: Debra McClinton (415) 552-4327.
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Illustrations: Andy Mitchell

WELCOME!

Wow! 1994 means it's been four years since Mark and I snuck into his engineering firm at 2 AM to photocopy our first issue of *boING boING*. While he worked the machine I stood guard outside the copy room, ready to whistle if I saw anything waddle by. We made 100 copies and then pasted a strip of bright pink construction paper on each cover to give it color. Our heads grew to the size of water-melons when *Factsheet Five* gave *bb* a glowing review. And we hooted with delight when we got our first order.

A lot has changed since then. Not only did our weekend hobby turn into a full time (and then some) job a long time ago, but zines, technology and pop culture have become new and very different animals. And an old animal is a dead animal as far as we're concerned, so we're very pleased with the changing trends.

Yet the new year had me in a brief but profound nostalgic state, so I took a walk down memory lane and made a list of a few things that happened in our world since *boING boING* first reared it's big-brained head. Lets take a gander at the list below for a moment to reflect on some of these changes...

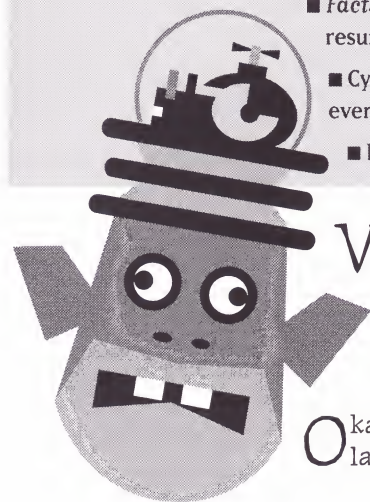


- *boING boING* bounced around to six different locations, and will move again this year (keep your eyes peeled for the new address!)
- Rudy Rucker put out 5 books and 3 videos.
- Alcor Life Extension Foundation froze 6 bodies and 8 heads.
- *Going Gaga* went from a way cool zine to a column in *boING boING*.
- *Mondo 2000* came into existence.
- *Factsheet Five* died and was resurrected.

- *Factsheet Five* died again and was resurrected again.
- Cyberpunk was exploited by everybody including us.
- Danforth Quayle was laughed

off of his perch and his name is now mistaken for a dinner entree.

- Ren & Stimpy charmed the planet.
- Beavis & Butt-head nauseated the planet.
- Virtual reality appeared in all sorts of MTV videos and commercials.
- Internet addresses are now on business cards.
- Millions of toddlers were attacked by the Barney meme.
- Durk Pearson and Sandy Shaw aged four years.
- *Wired* came into existence.
- *Wired* snatched Mark (the *boING boING* co-kahuna) and now he faithfully flips from *Wired* to *bb* to *Wired* everyday, like a well-trained chimp who wants to please two organ-grinders at once.



Well, enough of that. Gotta look forward again before we fall behind. Things mutate so fast nowadays, that even the focus of this issue changed from "women in cyberspace" to "concepts, designs and architecture" to the present "flashbacks and fast-forward." If you look closely enough, however, you'll see some traces of the earlier themes.

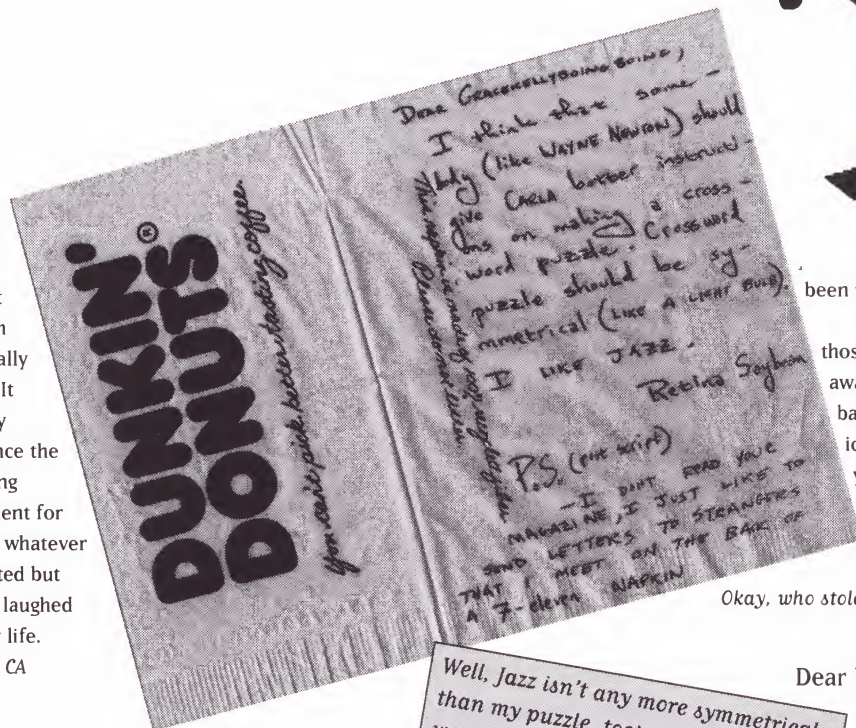
Okay, it's time I shut up so you can dig in and start having fun, but let me say one last thing: expect some REALLY profound *boING boING* mutations later this year!

Carla

BOUNCING BACK



Dear bOING bOING,
Finally got to read most of it today. Best issue yet, and I'm not just saying that... Especially liked Gareth's Cyborg thing. It was nice having the Haraway quotes picked out for me since the book's Marxofeminist opening bored me. And, the recruitment for the neodadaist cyberculture whatever was great, a tiny bit overstated but cool. And, the zine game... I laughed until I cried... it changed my life.
— R.U. Sirius, San Francisco CA



re smell funny. Have you been using soylent green?
"It's blisterman! Look at those chapped lips! No! Stay away! We don't want your bacon!" Must go... Need medicine... Thank you kindly for your zine... People...
Always... Chasing Me! —
Scot Schiele, Portland OR

Okay, who stole his Thorazine? — Mark

Dear Carla & Mark,
So, it's like this. I stepped off the plane in May, & this country is just too far gone. Like some withered mirror of 1930s Germany. It's serious biz man. Surveillance cameras everywhere. Then out of the shadows of gloom, bOING bOING hits the street like a loaded wallet, bursting with untold promise. A proverbial treasure chest for the 21st Century. PEACE
— Desmond K. Hill, Newcastle upon Tyne, England

Dear bOING bOING,
Your #11 cover is great! Reference: #11, page 3, "bOUNCING BACK," first letter, by Dick Oliver. First paragraph, "... And the virtual sex illustrations were a mutilation of all woman-kind." — He missed the point! At first glance the "virtual sex" sculpture does look like a bondage scene. It isn't. It is a "virtual reality" scene. The girl, experiencing the virtual reality, got into it of her own free will... perhaps she even built the device. Also note that she is drawing the essence from a group of small men who are held in bondage. So... it's more about girls just having fun, the way they want it. It is also safe sex. There is also an element

of female domination. What's up with that? Regards
— Eddie Hall,
Vancouver WA

bOINGeroonies!

That did it... Not only have I said that bOING bOING is the best zine I've ever read, but bb #10 has got to be the greatest literary entity I've ever seen in my bleedin' life! Jam packed info — no "filler" bullshit - excellent subject matter & a beautiful cover — love the new look. — Cary Groneveldt, New York NY

Dear bOING2,

I finally found a copy of your zine. I have heard so much about it, and I think I've found a cure for those little dreams I've been having where I'm dressed up as a frog and my accordion is broken. Grover the mail boy says I'm crazy. He keeps teasing me with taffy covered cashews and threatening to take you from me, but he won't get it! I won't let you fall into the hands of the OTHER ONES! I know! I know where he hides the bundt cake! The pages of

Well, Jazz isn't any more symmetrical than my puzzle, toots. Besides, if you would change your bad habits and read bOING bOING, you would've seen that it is a crossweird puzzle, which isn't supposed to look anything like a light bulb. Even Wayne Newton knows that. — Carla

Dear bOING bOING,

I have finally come up with a way to solve a problem and increase efficiency in many ways. It began when I worked in a company where we published government manuals. I was an editor and received my input from the technical writers, mostly handwritten. There were thou-

sands of parts, and each part had an identification number comprised of digits and letters. There was one major problem — when the round thing was a zero, some of the writers put a slash through it so the editors would know. But sometimes they forgot the slash, and there were other writers who thought that we should be able to tell the difference between their zeros and letter Os without any special markings. It was a problem to say the least, but I have come up with the solution. We should combine the zero and letter O into a single unit — and call it the zoro.

Think about it! If it's in the middle of a word, you'd know damn well it's an O. If it was 7850, you'd instinctively understand the last character was a zero. Just one less charac-

Continued on page 4

BOING BOING'S WETWARE ROSTER

"Mutating Simian Brains Since 1988"

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THANKS EVERYONE!

Letters (from page 3)

ter on the keyboards. When you multiply this by the millions of people who use computers, the time saved could be astronomical.

I am not a hog. I am willing to donate my idea to the country for the benefit of our economy. I would hope, however, to receive at least some credit for this innovation.

Sincerely — Herb Oakley, Haworth NJ

Nice try Herb, but since most of our readers are from Saturn, we'd have to silence anybody who tried to eliminate our "power letter." — Mark

Dear boING boING

Just picked up *boING boING* #11; it's always a pleasure to see a new issue.

I appreciate you printing my letter, but unfortunately a typographical error seems to have crept into it which renders the entire joke even more meaningless than it may have already been. When I described the H.O.L.D. I.T., I was referring to a *Hard-On Lucid Dream Induction Tool*, not "Hold-On" as your typographer referred to it (maybe he was holding on himself at the moment and got confused).

Is there any possibility that you could re-run my letter with the correct spelling, so that someone may actually catch the joke? — Jeff Kleinbard, New York NY

Nope, we won't run the original letter again; it'd spoil our plan to coax people who missed #11 into buying a back issue so they can figure out what the heck you're talking about. — Mark

Dear Carla & Mark,

I picked up #11, which was silly, delightful, disturbing, and another reason I should come into the 1990s and get myself a modem. My boyfriend had something to say about Jeff Kleinbard's allegation (in the lettercol of #11) that the mercury-filled penile strain gauge as part of a lucid dream induction device would likely only be useful for males. According to laboratory tests — how they get their data I don't know — women apparently do experi-

ence genital tumescence during REM periods. He suggested wrapping the strain gauge around the (rigid shelled) vibrator to monitor vaginal constriction and feeding information back to the vibrator. Since I don't have access to his source of information (which I suspect is one of those documentaries on the Discovery channel, and I assume would have been intentionally sketchy on the details), I don't know whether the female "erection" that could be monitored would be internal (vaginal), or external (clitoral/labial), or both.

Your "Zine Game" was hysterical, even if I did get only a little more than half the references (what is pomo?). I'll be looking forward to future issues. All the best, — E. J. Barnes, Quincy MA

"pomo" is just a post-pomo way to say "post modern." ✕

boING boING ONLINE!

If you'd like to join a virtual community of witty, charming people and engage in scintillating conversation, and perhaps even explore new ways to make the world a better place, then go right ahead.

But if you'd rather swap jokes and tall tales, talk about what should go into a Barney Piñata, brainstorm on ways to pull pranks, and exchange sleazy gossip, then get your virtual ass over to the boING boING (go bb) conference on the WELL! All you need is a modem, a computer and the ability to willingly make a fool of yourself like the rest of us! To get started, set your modem for 8,N,1 (if you don't know what this means, ask the neighborhood nerd) and dial (415) 332-6106 or telnet to *well.com*. See ya! ✕

boING boING is an actual publication. 544 Second Street, San Francisco CA 94107. Phone (415) 974-1172, Fax (415) 974-1216, e-mail (carla@well.com). All rights reserved forever by the contributors. Single copy price \$5 USA, \$6 elsewhere. Four Issue Subscription \$14 USA, \$20 elsewhere. Eight-issue subscriptions \$25 USA, \$35 elsewhere. No unsolicited fiction please. All correspondence becomes the property of *boING boING*. "Religion is the masterpiece of the art of animal training, for it trains people as to how they shall think" — Arthur Schopenhauer

FRINGEWARE INC.

Less slick than *Mondo 2000*, but sharing a similar cross techno-commodity-fetishism and liberal techno-capitalist outlook... Pioneering the penetration of cyberspace for the corporate megamarketing campaigns of the near future—*Alternative Press Review*

Persian intellectual troglodyte terrorist's whacked and informative zine carries academic economic discussions regarding computer and telecommunications technology—*Houston Press*

A combination cyberculture zine and a fringe technology catalog, looking at garage-tech, cyberarts, weird science and products and memes that can only be called "postmodern"—*Covert Culture Sourcebook*

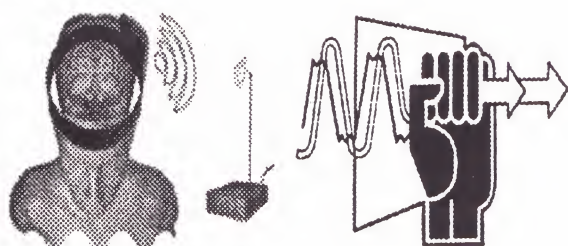
This is for the individual who sees advanced technology as not just another profit center for existing institutions, but as a means of personal empowerment and a tool for effecting radical social change—*Elements*

A small band of cyberpunks providing tours for neophytes through into the nefarious fringe worlds of cyberspace... at the same time, these cats are also seeking to facilitate the formation of a community—*The Lumpen Times*

Comes in three forms: a slick magazine/catalog, an email roundtable, and a store in Austin where you can buy hard-to-find wares for your brain, your auxiliary electronic brains, your body, and your community—*Wired*

Mail-order cyberpunk boutique offering software, books, zines and even clothing decorated with recycled electronics... Good job, guys!—*Factsheet Five*

I defy you to look through this and not order something—*BOING BOING*



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neurotica

■ Just Fake It: Slick-as-snot admakers for Nike's hiking shoes made a television commercial in Kenya using Samburu tribespeople. The commercial shows a Kenyan speaking in his native language, Maa, with the subtitle "Just Do It." But naughty Nike was caught cheating after an anthropologist from the University of Cincinnati reported that the man actually said, "I don't want these. Give me big shoes."

■ A 42-year-old mother from Nova Scotia wins the *BOING BOING* "I've-got-a-dirty-mind-and-want-to-punish-everybody-on-the-planet-because-of-it" award. The doting mom was sweating over a hot stove preparing a nutritious meal of "Zoodles" canned noodles for her children, and became horrified when she flipped the can upside-down and imagined that the cartoon palm trees on the label looked like human penises. Like a good citizen, she complained to the Zoodle people. And like a good company, the Zoodlers people redesigned the label so the mother wouldn't shock herself again.

■ Absolutely Nobody died of AIDS last year. An AIDS activist, Nobody was born with the name "David Powers." He had his name legally changed to "Absolutely Nobody" when he ran for Lt. Governor of Washington State in 1992. Nobody believed the position of Lt. Governor was a waste of taxpayers money and should be eliminated. Seven percent of the voters cast their ballots for Absolutely Nobody — more than for any third party candidate. Nobody died of complications due to AIDS on October 26, 1993. He was 37 years old.
[Steve O'Keefe]

■ Someone anonymously posted an obituary on February 21, 1994 to the Usenet group, alt.discordia, reporting that author Robert Anton Wilson had died of a heart attack in his home.

Upon returning home February 22, I logged on to the WELL to check my e-mail, as I always do, and noticed an enormous amount of mail containing the subject: RAW. I read several letters from people all over the world informing me of the post and asking me if it was indeed true. I was shocked. I immediately logged off and went to the answering machine, expecting to hear a message or two from mutu-

al friends telling me that Bob had indeed shuffled off this mortal coil. Instead all the messages were from mutual friends asking me if I knew anything.

Now I was suspicious. I stopped to think. Should I call Bob's house? No, bad move. What if it was true and his wife or one of his kids answered the phone? What would I say?

"Uh, this is Joe, and I was just wondering... is Bob dead?" No, that would never do. Instead I called my friend Nina, who knows Bob, and lives in the same town as his family.

"Hello, Nina? Hi, is Bob Wilson dead?" She started laughing — a good sign.

"No, I don't think so. I just spoke to him on the phone, and he said he's been getting calls all day asking him the same question!"

Great, now the rumor was dispelled. I logged back on to the WELL and answered all my mail and as many conference posts as I could find, informing the worried public that Bob was indeed alive. I then logged off again and called Bob's house to tell him what a shit-storm his virtual death had caused.

Instead of Bob I got a voice mail message with the following content:

"Uncle Bob's Voodoo Workshop and frozen Yogurt Stand.

Hey mon, listen to me.
We're havin' trouble with the new zombie.
He cannot see.
He cannot talk.
A nurse has come to make him walk."

Hmmm...
Here's the post that started it all:
Newsgroups: alt.discordia
Subject: RAWilson dead!
Date: 22 Feb 94 01:59:22 GMT

Noted Sci-Fi Author Found Dead in Home
(From the Feb 22 Los Angeles Times)

Noted science fiction author Robert Anton Wilson was found dead in his home yesterday, apparently the victim of a heart attack. Mr. Wilson, 63, was discovered by his wife, Arlen.

Mr. Wilson was the author of numerous books, including the co-authorship of the cult classic *The Illuminatus! Trilogy*. He was noted for his libertarian view-

points, love of technology, and off the wall humor. During his lifetime he authored more than 20 books.

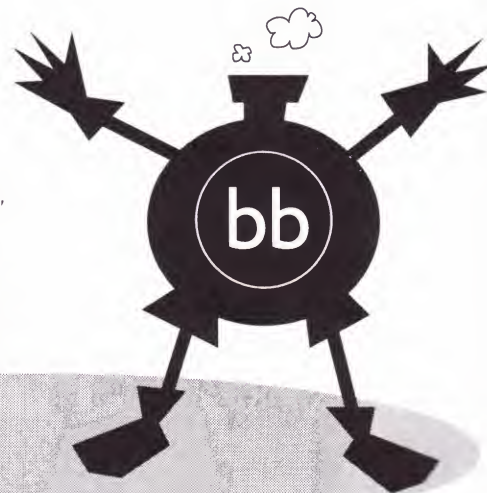
Mr. Wilson is survived by his wife and two children.

[Joseph Matheny: mediak@well.sf.ca.us]

■ NEC has recalled some of their laptops after users reported that their computers exploded when they turned them on.

■ As an experiment, the Japanese are manufacturing a sausage containing recycled "sewage solids," soybean protein, and steak flavoring. A spokesperson from the Environmental Assessment Center said, "Sewage isn't really such a dangerous and dirty thing." Even so, he has a hunch that the sausages probably won't replace rice as the national staple: "Sewage does have a slight image problem. I don't think people will be content eating something they know has been excreted by humans."

■ English cops, too frightened to try to apprehend real criminals who might hurt them, decided to bust harmless people and fine them lots of money instead. The unimaginatively named "Operation Marconi" was conducted by the pasty-faced South Yorkshire cops to catch people using scanners to listen to police radio transmissions. The cops reported a spurious story about a space alien landing nearby, and when curious citizens arrived to check it out, they were promptly arrested and charged with acting illegally on information in police broadcasts. While it's not against the law to listen to police reports in England, it is illegal to act on information gleaned from them. ✕



ONLINE TRIPPING



by Carla Sinclair

Okay, so you're all hooked up and ready to have fun on the Internet. You send e-mail to some of your friends, lurk through a few chat rooms, and even toot your own horn in one of the *BOING BOING* topics on the WELL. You're having a blast, but after a few weeks you want more. You've gotten comfy on your computer-friendly chair, and besides, it's too cold to do any outdoor activities. Well, you still might have to leave your domicile to go to work, or to talk your way out of a traffic ticket, but if all you want to do is cruise around for neat books and toys and music and clothes and stuff, stay put. Let your fingers do the cruising. You can do just about anything on the Internet. Tons of online services, "stores," and games are popping up, and it's really easy to get involved.

The trouble is, most people don't know where these digital sites are @. But this won't be a problem anymore, thanks to Michael Wolff and Company. Wolff has just put out the *Net Guide Book* (Random House, \$19.00) which lists over 3,000 places to go on the Net, and it's a lot easier to read than one of those fluorescent maps you have to use at the mall.

Everything from online shopping to news groups, music discussions, bird watching hotlines and dissertation abstracts are in this directory. You can get updates on the newest online hot spots by e-mailing info@go-net-guide.com or calling (800) NET-1133.

As thorough as *Net Guide* is, I still found several interesting online sites that aren't in my copy. Fire up your modem and check these out:

Extreme Books

You can get almost any small press, rare, or out-of-print book through this service, which was started last March by Mitzie Waltz and Steve Shultz. They

have a growing catalog of over 100 cool books (from publishers like Amok Press, Autonomedia, Semiotext(e), and Loompanics) that they keep in stock, and will search for any hard-to-get publications on request. They say they enjoy the hunt. Expect to get your goods within 6 weeks. But don't be confused. The books themselves aren't online, only their FREE catalog which is regularly updated (catalog@mailer.extremebooks.com).

Sex, Colon & Oral History

This is an online book that vibrates my antennas. I haven't read it yet (it's not out as I type this, but will be by the time you read this), but I'm looking forward to my history lesson. Price is \$19.95. For more info, e-mail (obs@market-place.com).

Internet Underground Music Archive

This is going to get some record companies real mad! Robert Lord and Jeff Patterson have come up with something that may revolutionize music distribution. They set up IUMA in October 1993 as a way for people on the Internet to access music from independent bands and artists. This means that if you have a PC with a sound board, you can listen to hard-to-find music free of charge. Mac users can download the melodies, but will have to steal a friend's PC to listen to the stuff (at least for now).

IUMA accepts music from anybody, whether it's a garage band, an opera singer, or someone with a strong knack for the kazoo. The bigwigs at IUMA look at music as shareware, which means the music in their archives will be internationally distributed free of charge. Each band or artist will be in charge of their own shareware negotiations. Some will give all of their cuts away for free, just to seek exposure, while others might tease

you with a song or two, and then ask for a few bucks for a full collection of their tunes. This would take out the middle folk, aka the record companies. So music would be cheaper to purchase.

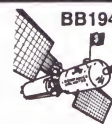
IUMA currently has almost 30 bands, including Ugly Mugs, who play "carnival freak music," a bluegrass group called Whistle Pigs, folk singer Marguerite Conti, and a techno band from Germany. You can also get a free catalog of available tunes from Bedazzled Records (rob@bedazzled.com), the first record company to be carried by IUMA.

Right now IUMA doesn't charge the musicians or the recipients. They just take donations. For more information, e-mail them at (ian@sunsite.unc.edu) or (mugly@cats.ucsc.edu). X

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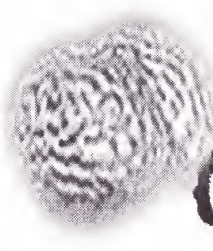
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BRAIN CANDY

Reviews of mostly cool stuff

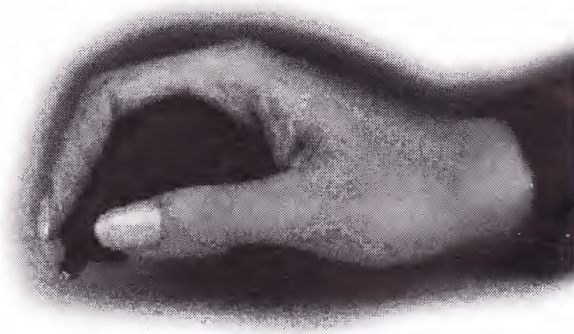
by Mark Frauenfelder

Stealth Pen

■ The evo.pen reminds me of something that might have dropped out of a spy's gadget bag: it's black, smooth, miniature and looks vaguely sinister, like it could be a mind-eraser with a built-in cold-fusion power supply. It's really just a ball point pen that costs \$1.50, but I still love to hold it in my hand and pretend I'm in a *Mission Impossible* episode.

Inventor Burt Rubin (who also created e.z. Wider rolling papers in the '70s for fumble-fingered dope smokers) claims that writing instruments have remained basically tubelike since 56 B.C., and that his 2-1/2" blob-shaped evo.pen – designed to fit the shape of the hand – represents the latest in pen evolution. Time will tell if Rubin's pen will flourish or end up in the failed-mutant graveyard, but after a month of use, I think it has a couple of things going for it: it's comfortable, and my scrawl is more legible. One problem: the pen's surface is so smooth that when my hand gets sweaty, it wants to slide around. So before evo.pen, Inc. goes hog-wild with extra colors, hiliteres, and pencil versions, I hope they make one with a textured finish.

evo.pen [\$1.50, evo.pen, Inc. (212) 764 -0900, fax (212) 213-1065]



Turtle Wax Lobotomy

■ Did a robot draw the pictures in this book called *Good Taste Gone Bad*? They're so smooth, and everything's perfect. The people in the drawings are immaculate; they have lacquered hair, flawless teeth, and they own all the greatest manufactured products: lava lamps, bowling balls, hot rods, leopard skin tights, Spam, plastic skulls, X-Ray spex, Reddi Whip, color TVs and peace-sign medallions. There's no Mother Nature to mess up the Astroturf in the Mitch O'Connell universe; everything is as shiny as a warm puddle of Velveeta.

But upon closer inspection, you begin to see that Mr. O'Connell doesn't much care for the human race. O'Connell's people have about as much control over their behavior as the praying mantis that eats its lover during the throes of copulation. They see a product - they buy it. They see an attractive person - their eyes jump from their sockets and their tongues produce buckets of drool. They eat Frankenberry cereal – they have a religious experience.

O'Connell is so good at parodying advertising that he has been hired to design REAL advertisements, many of which are included in this ultra-glossy book. Even in these real ads, O'Connell's "I hate everybody" attitude can't be hidden beneath the faultless smiles of the shiny animatronic people populating the drawings. *Good Taste Gone Bad* is the work of a sick individual, someone who can reduce the wonder, the thrill, and the joy of life into mere brand names of over-processed products (page 57), and if you're smart you'll pull out your check-book and buy a copy today!

Good Taste Gone Bad, by Mitch O'Connell [\$15, PO Box 267869, Chicago IL 60626]



Chemical Kidstuff

■ Look at the claims made by the manufacturers of Happy Camper pills: "RELIVE YOUR CHILDHOOD. Remember what it was like when you were a little kid? Now you can recapture those great feelings with Happy Camper, the all-natural supplement that truly lives up to its name. Happy Camper – it's attitude food for the '90s." The ingredients are as follows: Passion Flower, Siberian Ginseng, Kava Kava, Gotu Kola, Kola Nut, Schizandra, Wood Betony and Lavender. I bought a bottle of 15 capsules for \$4.49, not because I believed their claim, but because I liked the label. Guess what: I DID relive my childhood! I didn't get any kind of buzz at all, but it reminded me of sending in for stuff from the *Johnson Smith Novelty Catalog*, stuff that looked great in the tiny ads, but ended up being a total disappointment, like the "six-foot remote control ghost," which was just a balloon, a plastic bag and a piece of string, or the "exploding pellets," which were just little balls of silver-painted clay. Childhood is full of bummers. Look at how hideous Crackerjack prizes have become. They're just little baseball cards now. The only people getting happy are the ones selling this crap.

Happy Camper [Pep Products: (800) 833-8737]

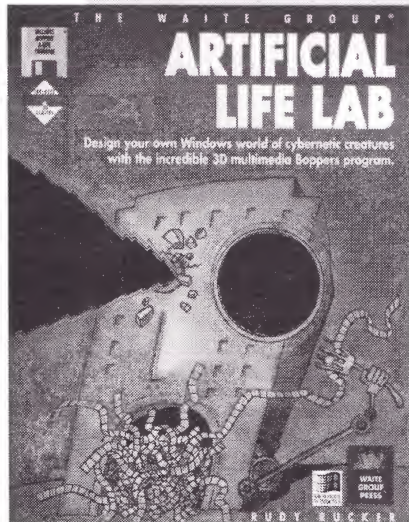
Circus of the Scars

■ If you missed the Jim Rose Circus Sideshow at Lollapalooza '92, this video is your chance to see people swallow razor blades, stick pins through their cheeks, rub their face in glass shards, lift heavy objects with pierced genitals, and gobble live bugs. Government officials have tried to ban shows, and Rose himself has been hospitalized after eating five light bulbs in one day. I was a little afraid to watch this video, but I quickly warmed up to the charming performers who put their health on the line to amuse us. The most fascinating/dis-



gusting act is performed by Matt "The Tube" Crowley, who feeds a clear plastic tube through his nose down to his stomach and then pumps it full of beer, ketchup, chocolate syrup and Maalox. After a minute, he pumps the mixed-up liquids back up into a pitcher and serves mugs of the stuff to thirsty audience members. Do not watch this show while drinking a milkshake.

The Jim Rose Circus Sideshow Video [american recordings: (818) 973-4545. fax (818) 973-4571]



The God of Bugs

■ For the last several years, Rudy Rucker has been studying artificial life. His first program, *CA Lab* (Autodesk, 1989) explored cellular automata: grids of stationary creatures whose health (indicated by color) is dependent on the health of neighboring creatures. In 1991, Rucker co-developed *Chaos: The Software* (Autodesk), a set of programs based on James Gleick's book *Chaos: The Making of a New Science*. His latest project, *Artificial Life Lab*, is

both an introductory book to the concepts of artificial life, such as flocking, computer viruses, and genetic algorithms, as well as a DOS program that lets you experiment with mobile electronic creatures called boppers. The colorful trails left by the little boppers are often beautiful, and the complexity of their behavior is amazingly lifelike. This book, along with Steven Levy's *Artificial Life* (Pantheon, 1992), is the best way to learn about one of the most exciting developments of the twentieth century.

Artificial Life Lab, by Rudy Rucker [\$34.95. Waite Group Press (800) 788-3123. (510) 658-3453]

MANHATTAN

I came back from a breakfast of deli fried eggs and corned beef hash and smoked half a jay in our Times Square hotel room. My wife Sybil was off on a trip to the Met; we'd split up at the deli, and I was to spend the day wandering around alone. We thought it would be fun not to link up for our first day in NYC. High, I went into the bathroom, massaging my stomach, and took a nice big shit. And then I had a big scare: the doorknob fell off and when I tried to put it back on I almost pushed the spindle out on the other side.

ZIP.4: RUDY RUCKER TRIPS TO THE EAST

Before trying again to get the knob on, I felt the door to see if I could kick it open. It was steel. Whoa. Could I really be trapped in here until 3 PM when Sybil comes back? Does God hate me this much? Instead of going out to play, I'll be miserably locked in a bathroom all day? But then, whew, I got the knob to work.

Out on the street I was watching some Africans with attaché cases of counterfeit watches. When the police came, one up the block would whistle or yell, and the others would close up their cases. Then I started watching a window-washer, and just stood there on Fifth Avenue staring at everything. So quite soon a NYC sharpie comes up to me, a Ratso Rizzo, with an exact Dustin Hoffman smile, "Hi, how are you doing?" I had my shades on, and instead of answering, I held up my index finger and waved it "No" side to side, then walked off. Last time I was in NYC I let a guy start talking to me about my camera, and he tricked me into buying a shitty lens I've never used, and he even put a smell on my camera that led to it getting lost in a cab later that day.

I was still feeling high and went into a

lunch counter to get a bottle of water. I took a vitamin C pill with the water, and the guy at the counter who'd been shadowboxing with the owner cocked his head and gave me a "bad" look for taking a pill in his place.

Way uptown I picked up a good new Kerouac book of poems, the book just published in 1992, called *POMES ALL SIZES*, and it was fun carrying that book around. I walked the fifty blocks home, stopped at a restaurant to eat a tuna pizza, me and Jack K., hanging out with his poems, all about (1) we all die, (2) this world is a dream, (3) drinking. Sweet and sad, and wanting to stop and try to see the no-mind moment he talks about.

Tokyo

It started with a request by Humanmedia, a Tokyo publicity agency, for slides from the program "CA LAB," also known as "Rudy Rucker's Cellular Automata Laboratory." The slides were to appear in an exhibition on artificial life at the "Tokyo International Arts Museum."

Several weeks of faxes ensued. By the end, Humanmedia had set up a series of five lectures, five magazine interviews, and two

book signings for me. The proposed speaking fees looked like about enough to cover a trip for me along with my wife Sybil and our 18-year-old daughter, Ida.

Here are some notes on the trip.

The Tokyo International Arts Museum turned out to be a brand-new building in an odd-looking planned suburb on a rail line some twenty miles out of Tokyo. It was owned by the Toshiba electronics company, as far as I could tell. The Japanese are kind of casual about what they call a museum.

The main floor was occupied by the show I was in, "A-Life World." There were great, mind-wrenching videos by the Japanese computer-graphics artist Yoichiro Kawaguchi, also great videos by Karl Sims and William Latham. There were also realtime a-life computations going on, including a twisting figure called "Neuro Baby" that changed its shape when you yelled at the screen, and a lovely self-generating graphics program by Toshihiro Anzai called "Rambler."

"CA LAB" was nicely installed on ten color laptops resting on a line of music stands, each laptop running a different cellular automation rule. Some of the rules

showed organic pulsing scrolls, some showed tiny scuttling gliders, some showed slowly boiling colors.

Before the talk, I had an hour to kill in the suburb surrounding the Tokyo International Arts Museum. Right past the museum was a giant building the size of a baseball stadium, all sealed up, with fanciful towers on it. My translator, a pleasant, ironic-looking woman named Yoko, explained to me, "That's Sanrio Puroland. They are the makers of Hello Kitty. It's a place for children. Like Disneyland."

Hello Kitty of course is the groovy little mouthless cat that you see drawn on so many Japanese children's knapsacks and stationery. The really strange thing is that, as far as I could find out, there are no Hello Kitty cartoons or comic books. Hello Kitty is simply an icon, like the Happy Face.

Outside the museum, I was drawn by the excitement of the bridge leading to Sanrio Puroland. I couldn't stop myself from going in, even though it cost ¥30,000, the equivalent (with the dollar at a historic low that day) of \$30. I knew it was my journalistic duty to investigate.

Inside the huge sealed building it smelled like the bodies of thousands of people, many of them children in diapers. I was the only Westerner. The guards waved me forward, and I went into a huge dark hall.

There was unbelievably loud, amplified music playing saccharine disco-type tunes, with many words in English. "Party in Puroland, Everybody Party!" Down on the floor below were people in costumes marching around and around in the circle of an endless parade. One of them was dressed like Hello Kitty.

I couldn't pause to look at first, as young guards in white gloves kept waving me on. I wound up and down flight after flight of undulating stairs, with all the guard-rails lined by parents holding young children.

Finally I found a stopping place down near the floor. In the middle of the floor was a central structure like a giant redwood, bedizened with lights, smoke machines, and mechanical bubble blowers. The colored lights glistened on the bubbles in the thick air as the disco roared. "Party in Puroland!" Hello Kitty was twenty feet from me, and next to her was a girl in gold bathing suit and cape, smiling and dancing. But... if this was like Disneyland, where were the rides?

I stumbled off down an empty hall that led away from the spectacle. Behind glass cases were sculptures of laughing trees making candy. And here were a cluster of candy stores, and stores selling Hello Kitty products. I felt sorry for the parents leading their children around in the hideous saccharine din of this virtual reality gone wrong.

I made it back out into the fresh air and walked back to the "A-Life World" show. After the stench and noise and visual assault of Puroland, I couldn't look at the weird a-life videos anymore. But the realtime computer simulations were still okay. They were really alive, they had their gnarl and sex and death.

My first talk was in a hall on the floor below the "A-Life World" show. It was completely full; my handlers told me that some of them were technical, and some were science-fiction fans. I would say a sen-

LAST TIME I WAS IN NYC I LET A GUY START TALKING TO ME ABOUT MY CAMERA, AND HE TRICKED ME INTO BUYING A SHITTY LENS I'VE NEVER USED, AND HE EVEN PUT A SMELL ON MY CAMERA THAT LED TO IT GETTING LOST IN A CAB LATER THAT DAY.

tence in English, and then Yoko would say it in Japanese. This gave my talking a calm, oracular quality.

As I talked, I ran realtime demos of CA LAB and of my new a-life program, BOPPERS, using my color laptop to feed them into a giant video screen. I explained that life and artificial life consist of three things: Gnarl, Sex, and Death.

Gnarl means that life is not too simple, like a crystal, and not too complicated, like a gas. Life arises in the zone of complexity and chaos, like turbulence.

Sex means three things: having a body that is grown from a genetic description, being able to copy your genes and grow a

child body, and being able to combine your genes with someone else's genes in the mating process.

Death is another way of talking about natural selection or the survival of the fittest.

After the talk, they asked questions for almost an hour. I was surprised how many of the questions were philosophical. Like, "does a-life have soul?" To that question I gave my standard Zen answer, though I felt a little odd to be trotting it out here in Japan: "There is only one soul, and this soul is everywhere; the universal rain moistens all creatures." It

felt cool to be saying these things, one sentence at a time, with steady Yoko translating me on the fly.

Speaking of Zen, I got a book about Zen gardens when we were in Kyoto. When I realized all the gardens in the book were in Kyoto I had a big flash of envy for fellow a-life worker Tom Ray who has just gotten a longterm position in Kyoto. But a few days later I'm thinking I really would not want to live in Japan and be a foreigner forever. They treat me great when they know who I am, but when they don't know, I'm just a goob.

Though if I knew the language I wouldn't be a goob — but I'd probably be a cringer.

Also the air really really sucks in Japan; it's humid and polluted and hot.

In Kyoto, we went to the most famous Zen rock garden, Ryoanji, raked gravel with fifteen rocks. I saw an ant on the edge near us, then I saw a dragon-fly landing on the right end, and then later, alone, I saw a skinny Japanese lizard crawl under the biggest rock of the group of five. There seemed to be quite a space under the big rock; it looked like a lizard-sized cave. The world's most enlightened lizard. To put my head into the head of that lizard — this is a durable enlightenment trick that the rock garden has now given me, this is something that I am bringing home with me to mix into my visions, a life as the skinny lizard under the Zen garden rock. ✕

Graphics produced using Autodesk's "Chaos:The Software," written by Rudy Rucker & Josh Gordon.

Autodesk: (415) 332-2344.

A day in the life of a digital sweatshop drone... by Kristin Spence

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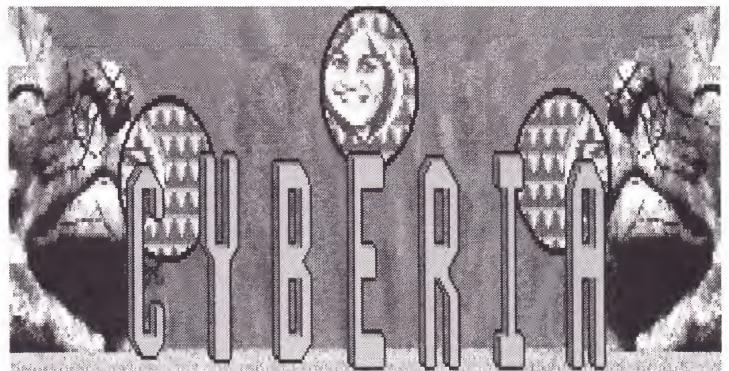
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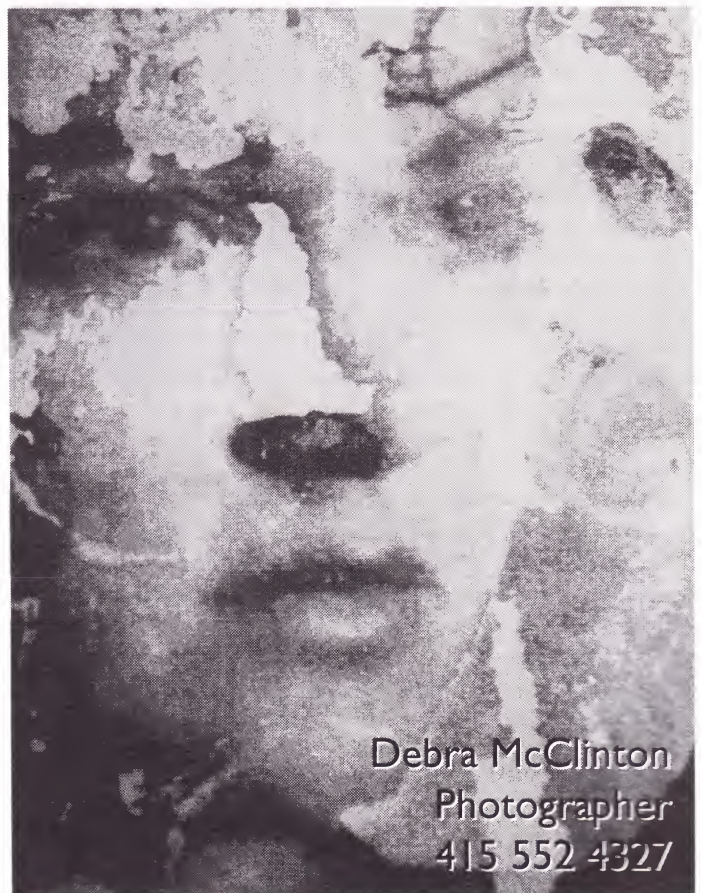
Virtual Worlds



Techno Music Review

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Debra McClinton
Photographer
415 552 4327

You attempt to remove a tumor from your cat – on the couch, with an X-acto blade and a turkey baster, ooze spills everywhere, the cat dies.

You never flush the toilet.

You rarely bathe, and when you do

use a crusted washcloth set by the toilet.

You play deadhead music late at night, you leave the CD player on all day.

You make pasta in the frying pan and leave it to stick.

Ode to Dumbshit

The Roommate from Hell by Patti Parisi

the shower is left covered in black grime.

The sound of bubbling bong water wakes others up at night, in the morning.

You are always sick with bronchitis.

You spit green phlegm in the kitchen and bathroom sinks.

You leave the green phlegm in the sinks. It dries, stuck.

You come home late at night, you leave all the lights on.

You never replace the light bulbs.

You sleep all day, you are draped on the furniture, usually naked.

You make homemade candles; you pour hot dripping wax into the Tupperware; wax droplets cover the stove, the burners, the toaster, the glasses, the forks.

You sleep with unemployed granolas, some men, some women.

You don't know their last names.

The two or three of you screw on the living room couch.

You take a bite of cookie or cracker and throw the unfinished bit into the cupboard.

You cut open a pomegranate and leave its guts on the floor and counter.

The oven stays on all night.

You crank the heat up to 80 degrees, you complain about the utility bill.

You drive a rusted green nova, you leave it in the driveway.

You drive it with a two-week-old flat tire.

You refuse to buy toilet paper, you

You leave crusted dishes in the living room, on the floor, on the counters, never to be washed.

You, as a waitress, brag about double charging large parties for tips; you steal.

You leave the windows and doors open in the dead of winter.

You mope for months because an unemployed boy who lives in a caboose screws other women.

You burn all his dirty underwear on your roommate's grill.

You kick your cat against the wall and wonder why it disappeared.

You allow your friend to drop off a cat, you never pet it, you take it to the Humane Society.

You have burned the lampshade off the lamp by leaving it on all night.

You save empty cereal and granola bar boxes.

You slam doors, you scream, you are shrill.

You leave the iron plugged in.

You never empty the dryer's lint filter.

You throw parties, your friends throw beer cans and you throw up.

Your room smells like decomposition.

You sleep with your patrons and they give you money.

You are rude or hang up on roommates' friends.

You break the front door, the screen door and the lock.

You wipe crumbs and juice to the floor.

You deal drugs from home.

You avoid bill collectors and the police.

You call your dad crying, he sends you hundreds of dollars to bail you out.

You stomp mud all over the clean kitchen floor, saying it needs fall color.

You lay out in the sun, in a bikini, all day, regardless of the season, to recover from a hangover.

You replace your car's broken headlight with a C-battery-powered Target flashlight.

Sharp objects protrude from your car, scraping up the neighbors' thighs.

You drop hair, plastic, hot wax, phlegm down the drain; the disposal has ceased functioning seven or eight times.

You take up Tarot card reading, you paint symbols on marbles, you leave these marbles all over the living room.

A circle of waxy Q-tips and dirty dental floss surround the bathroom's trashcan.

You leave uncovered cans of cat food in the refrigerator.

You want to turn the basement into a marijuana plantation. X



"now" with the volume cranked up

WILLIAM GIBSON INTERVIEW BY MARISA GOLINI

It's a typical day in the newsroom of 54 Rock Radio, in Canada's capital. I've just finished my morning news run, and my colleague is going through some of the advanced hardcovers we receive for possible interviews. Knowing I enjoy SF, he says, "Got a new science fiction book in. Interested in interviewing the author?."

"Maybe," I say. "Who is it?"

"Some guy named Bill Gibson. Is he important?"

I look up dumbfounded. My colleague is not into SF at all so maybe I heard wrong. "William Gibson?" I ask. He nods, and I shriek.

A few weeks later, Gibson ambled into the station... about 45 minutes late due to his terribly crunched interview schedule, but I figured I had him now and everyone else could wait... so we settled in for a little chat. I really didn't know what to expect from Gibson. In truth, I was afraid I'd be faced with some intellectual elitist. How wrong I was. I found Gibson witty, charming, laid-back, easy to talk with, and full of interesting anecdotes — all recounted with that delightful Virginian drawl. The interview was conducted at 54 Rock Radio in Ottawa, Ontario Canada on Sept. 16, 1993

— Marisa Golini

with computers." It's the first time the underground has had computers. I mean the '60s would've been really different if all us hippies had had desktop publishing!

Techno rebels!

Yeah. I think we may be headed for something like that, but it's gonna happen in the early 21st century. People will probably look back from the mid-21st century at what we call cyberpunk, and see it like the precursor phenomenon to whatever it is they're going through.

So you don't think [cyberpunk's reemergence] has anything to do with more people using computers and therefore finding out about that "scene?"

There's that too. But I don't think we're going to see anything too drastic happen culturally around computers until the user-interface evolves to the point where it's easy to use. I mean, when you say "hey, I do a lot of e-mail" or "hey, I hang out on the Internet" — the reason that has a kind of elite buzz to it, is that the learning curve is still too steep.

What do you think of these groups and artists such as U2, Donny Fagen and Billy Idol who say that you have inspired their latest works? Because, I know as far as U2 goes... their Zoo TV tour was like something out of the dark and squishy parts of your brain!

Yeah! I was really happy with that! I met them (U2) during both their stops in Vancouver. I came to their attention

bOING bOING: So what's up with this Cyberpunk revival?

William Gibson: Revival?

O.K. Re-emergence. Haven't you noticed? It's been around for at least 10 years, at least since Neuromancer, but as of late, Time magazine does a cover story, local newspapers publish articles. All of a sudden, it's something completely new. That's a good point. I think 10 years ago it was a literary term used in pop culture

analysis. Initially you could say "these six guys are writing cyberpunk science fiction." Then it became "see that video, that's very cyberpunk," and then it got to, "man, those trousers... those are way cyberpunk." So it became one of the colorations of '80s pop culture. I think the reason it's coming out now is because the meaning has changed. Now if you did a dictionary definition of cyberpunk, definition #1 would be something like "bohemia with computers," or "the underground

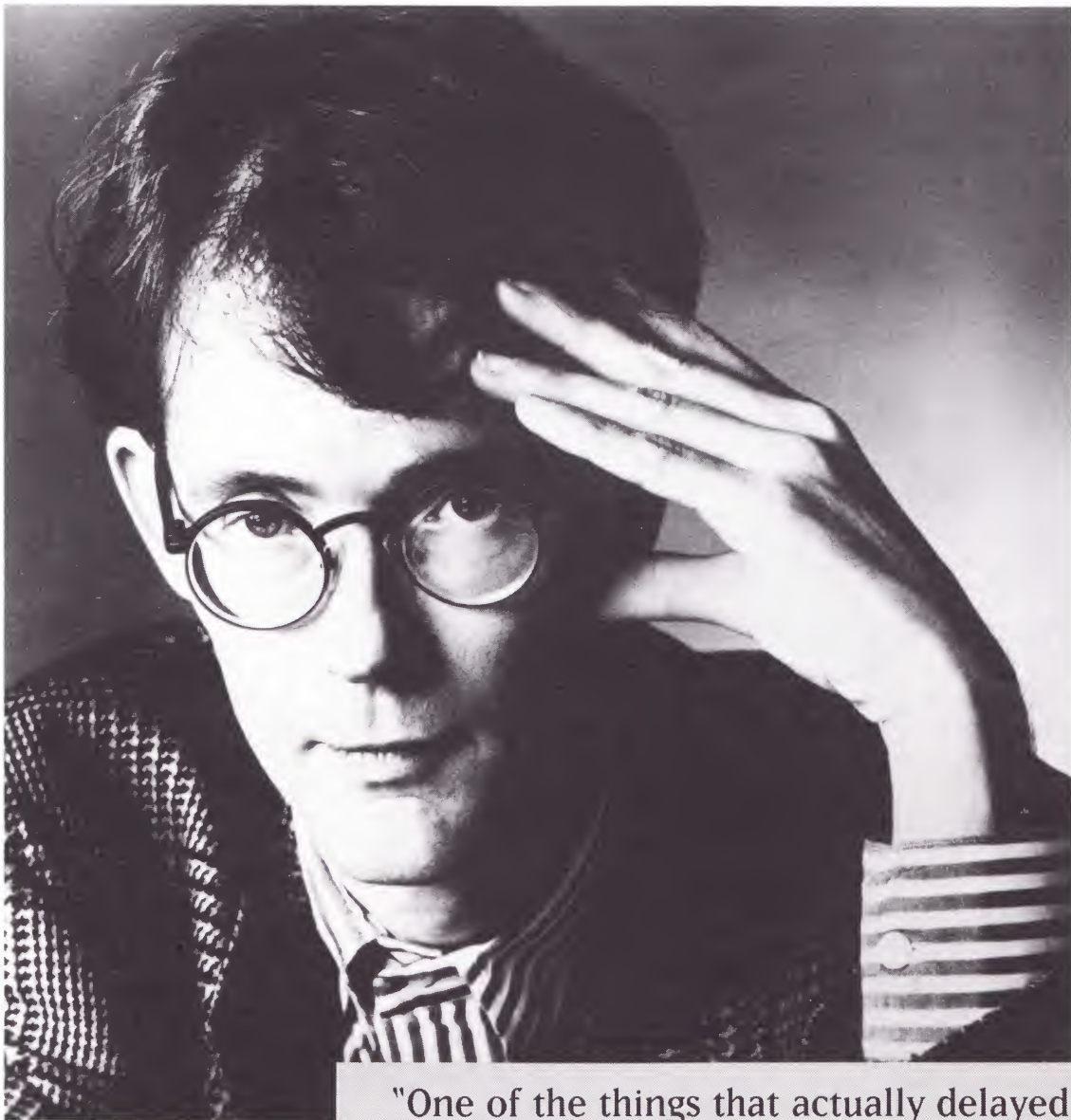


Photo: Sigrid Estrada

"One of the things that actually delayed the completion of *Virtual Light* was that I had to wait for the Soviet Union to formally collapse."

through the men who designed the Steel Wheels set for the Rolling Stones. They were working totally from my early fiction, and sold the Steel Wheels design to the Stones by giving them my books and saying, "Read this, this is what we're gonna do." I didn't know that at the time or I would've gone to see the show. Anyhow, the same company did Zoo TV and this time they told me about it. Actually, one of the plans (it didn't work out because I couldn't convince my literary agents to let them go ahead and do it) Bono suggested they run one of my novels on an electric light-bulb ticker tape screen... just run the text through during the course of the concert.

That would've been great!

Yeah, anyway I've hung out with them and there has been some exchange of ideas. We've been trying to figure out some way we can work together.

With Donald Fagen, after having so heavily larded my first novel with Steely Dan references, I was really delighted to find that he actually read it, and thought it was cool! Early Steely Dan tunes have always been huge favorites of mine.

Now, we come down to Billy Idol...

And he's getting flamed on the net. I had lunch with Billy years ago in Hollywood and we were talking about the possibility of his acting in a film that

someone was trying to make based on some piece of fiction of mine, and I thought he was a very likable guy. He had a sense of humor about what he was doing that is not apparent in the product he puts out. If I run into him again, we can have a good laugh about what he's doing now!

If you want to hear a group that, to my mind, really does embody what I'm doing... there's a West German band called Plan B. They sound like early Elvis Costello turned into rap music... I've got them in heavy rotation!

Let's talk Virtual Light. It's a different

vision than your earlier novels. People have said it's less bleak, more fun, and more accessible. Would you agree? Well... I think it's less bleak if you read it in a certain way. It's a comic novel. The intention is comic. But comic doesn't rule out bleak. In the sense that Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* was a pretty funny movie—but very bleak. I think the take on that is how you interpret the term "happy ending." So if you think, O.K., he gets the girl, the bad guys get the shaft, BUT, what

super-glued to the tables.

Each computer has its own e-mail address so you can go in, log on and do your stuff. So these kids come in off the streets with bones through their noses and their bodies covered in heavy Samoan blackwork. They look like extras out of the back streets of *Blade Runner*, and they sit down and they do their e-mail! The underground in San Francisco has mutated into a really astonishing thing.

A lot of the things you write about, at least to me, seem perfectly plausible... sometimes it really creeps me out when I read this stuff!

Well, you know it's funny, sometimes when I go to do interviews with the press, an older interviewer will be both horrified and depressed by the book. One woman in Toronto said to me after the interview, "But is there nothing you can tell me to give me hope?" (laughs) That's one response, but then I saw some people being interviewed while standing in line for my book signing in Montreal and one guy said, "I can't wait to live in the world he's describing! I want to live in a William Gibson novel!" He was maybe 20, so there are very different responses.

Would you like to live in a William Gibson novel?

Well, not particularly... but I'd like to go there for a vacation!

[At this point, the literary agent was waving a watch at me through the glass. I smiled and squeezed in a few more bits and pieces]

I just want to mention that I read your "Aliens 3" script and I loved it. It was so much better than the dreg we ended up with.

Thank you. [My version] would've cost about 170-million dollars to film so that was part of the problem... a few thousand full-sized aliens on screen is asking for a bit much I guess!

[At this point I handed him my copy of Virtual Light and a hard copy of Agrippa to sign...we had a good laugh over that]

Hey, where did you find it [Agrippa]?

It's still on the Internet...just ask and you shall receive!

Really? What I've come to realize after the fact, is that was the whole point. How else could you guarantee that a 2000-word poem would remain on the Internet forever? I built my daddy a monument in cyberspace! I think that's cool!

It's very cool. X

Virtual Light, by William Gibson: \$21.95. Bantam Books.

q Would you like to live in a William Gibson novel?

a Well, not particularly... but I'd like to go there for a vacation!

have they bought into to get this to happen? You can read it both ways.

Yeah I guess so. I also think it's really cool that one of your protagonists is a bicycle messenger, and I like the whole idea of information, even in a hi-tech age, still having to be carried around by hand for security reasons.

Well, you can't fax a plane ticket!

It keeps you grounded when you still have to rely on the "Pony Express," so to speak.

Yeah. Like the creepy guy from the Medellin cartel who gets his throat cut - he's another kind of bicycle messenger. He's flying around in a Concord and staying in luxury hotels, but his job is to physically carry this piece of information. Chevette's there because bicycle messengers, particularly in San Francisco, are a really hot subculture.

There are places where messengers hang, and there are messenger fanzines! I got everything I know about being a bike messenger from *Mercury Rising*, which is a fanzine put out by the San Francisco Bike Messenger's Association. There's this terrific coffeehouse in the lower Haight called The Horseshoe where messengers hang and young people with lots of tattoos and multiple piercings go there too. It's the only coffee house I've ever seen where they've got laptop computers

Obviously setting the novel so near in the future didn't restrict you in any way...the problem being with predicting things 10 years from now, the beginnings of those changes have to be happening right now.

One of the things that actually delayed the completion of the novel was that I had to wait for the Soviet Union to formally collapse. I didn't quite realize at the time what I was waiting for, but really, the world of *Virtual Light* is just "now" with the volume cranked up. It doesn't really say in the book that it's 2005...I think you can work out exactly when it is because you figure out when Rydell was born, etc. But in the proposal that I sent to the publisher's, I mentioned 2005, and they put it in the flap copy which I wasn't entirely happy with, but I've sorta gotten into it now because people come in and say "hey, that can't possibly happen now...things can't change that much in 10 years," and I say "yeah, that's what they said in Yugoslavia." (laughs)

A lot can happen in 10 years... particularly as you near the end of the century and the millennium. We're going to see a lot of pretty wacky religious stuff come down, unfortunately. I mean we've already seen it. That stuff in Waco weirded me out a little more than it did most people because I'd already written in that Sublet, the Texan from the video cult, was from Waco.

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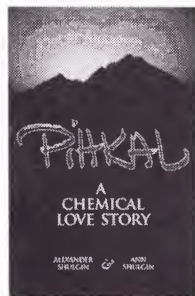
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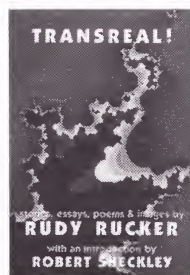
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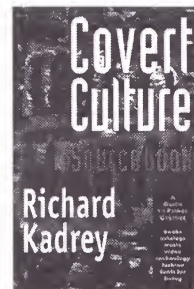


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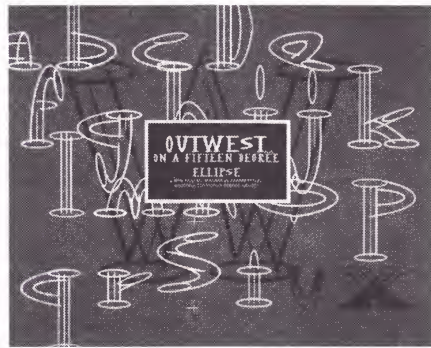
Purveyors of Typographic Garbage

by Dave Mandl

Type should be invisible. This old dictum was design dogma for so long that it might as well have been a law of nature. Though writers could freely experiment with everything from beat poetry to cyberpunk fiction, type jockeys were expected to behave themselves, and faithfully render every precious word un-"interpreted" and uncolored by superfluous serifs or violations of the sacred page grid. As one authority said, typography should be a wine goblet, not of "solid gold, wrought in the most exquisite patterns," but of "crystal-clear glass, thin as a bubble and transparent ... designed to reveal rather than hide the beautiful thing which it was meant to contain." In other words, as a casting director once told a friend of mine who had been picked off the stage at CBGB to be an extra in a film: "Smile, look cute, and for Christ's sake don't say anything!"

This unwritten rule has changed in the last decade, however, and typographers can largely give thanks to *Emigre*, a small Sacramento-based graphic design magazine. Founded ten years ago by publisher/editor/art director Rudy VanderLans and type designer Zuzana Licko, the magazine has played an important role in the largest revolution to hit the printed page since Dada. Since its inception, *Emigre* has relentlessly scorned the traditional subordinate role of the typographer and celebrated the freedom of expres-

sion now available to designers. They have consistently presented the work and theoretical writing of some of the most *outré* design experimenters (and often pushed even further with VanderLans's art direction). Its success is evident not only by the increasing circulation of the magazine itself,



but also by the tremendous popularity of *Emigre*'s fonts, and the growth of their influence in the design world.

Emigre attempts to offset the long-accepted imbalance between form and content, to make full use of the printed page, and to create a richer interpretation of the underlying text. Whereas in the past typography functioned as little more than a plain white envelope, the bare necessity to deliver the writer's words to the reader, it is now also an exciting work of

graphic art in its own right. It works in tandem with, or adds seasoning to the author's words. The finished page, book, or article is a genuine collaboration between the writer and graphic designer, an organic whole.

The results of this new typographic freedom evoke many reactions which range from praise to expressions of shock and horror. Predictably, some established designers working in more conservative or "classical" styles have been less than enthusiastic about the results of the new typographical experiments. (In an interview in *Print* magazine, for example, Italian designer Massimo Vignelli referred to *Emigre*'s work as "typographic garbage.") The main concern of the new typography, which has been addressed repeatedly in the pages of *Emigre*, is the question of *legibility*: Do the magazine's multi-layered, overprinted, spindled, mutilated, and deconstructed typographics render the writers' words unreadable? This of course begs the question of what legibility is in the first place, and the answer is by no means clear.

Criticism of the new typography on grounds of illegibility claims that the no-holds-barred, every-

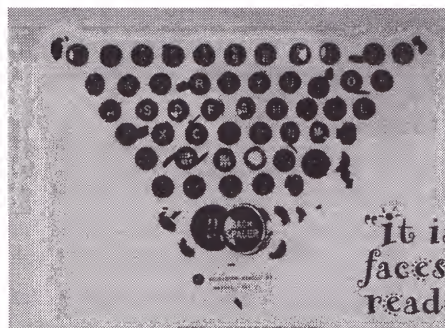
thing-but-the-kitchen-sink approach to design just makes for a cluttered page. Disparate graphic elements of all shapes and sizes battle with the author's words for the reader's attention. This greatly increases the time it takes to simply get through the text. The reader is forced to navigate through twisting blocks of type of different sizes and weights, some black-on-white, some "reversed out," some upside-down, and some split between pages of a spread, or chopped right down the middle.

However, *Emigre's* one endlessly repeated truism is that "it is the reader's familiarity with typefaces that accounts for their legibility; readers read best what they read most." A look at the type of 500 years ago bears this out: The "black letter" faces common in the Middle Ages were as readable then as Times Roman is now. Set in a book today, however, black letter would be considered all but illegible. Type recognition is evolutionary, a result of years and years of experience with particular typefaces set in particular formats. As such, it exists as a changing concept. *Emigre* pushes this point by regularly using its own highly individual fonts (which would be considered "display faces" by many conservative designers), in solid running text in the magazine. So is type evolving away from Caslon and towards *Emigre's* Remedy (used in the headline for this article-ed)? Will Times Roman be the black letter of 2493? "I wish I knew," says VanderLans, who concedes that the next evolutionary change may be in media, for example, rather than typography.

As with much *avant-garde* art, *Emigre's* power lies in the consistent newness of the art and design it features. This is the flipside of the legibility problem, and it works to

the magazine's advantage. Given the surprising uniformity of most book and magazine design, the strangeness of *Emigre* spreads are in themselves pleasantly jarring. Poring over a brand new issue of the magazine is always an adventure, since no two issues are quite the same except for their size. The "*Emigre* style" is stunning by its very nature, and this is due in large part to the wonderful anarchy and unpredictability inherent in it. But if reading the magazine is a game, the game has to be kept interesting; the solution must be different every time. The continued success of *Emigre* has been largely due to the fact that it has kept up its high level of surprise and unpredictability, without sacrificing its aesthetics.

The problem of being consistently



"It is the reader's familiarity with typefaces that accounts for their legibility; readers read best what they read most."

"new" was discussed in *Emigre* recently. In an interview with David Carson, the award-winning designer of *Ray Gun* (a magazine that pushes "illegibility" to the limit and features some of the most extreme typographic experimentation being done today), VanderLans pointed out that "you [Carson] are, of course, creating towering expectations when you design these brilliant issues; you have to constantly outdo yourself." VanderLans acknowledged that he too felt these pressures. This may be more of a problem for a magazine like *Ray Gun* than it is for *Emigre*, since *Ray Gun* is still a relatively traditional music magazine, with interviews, artist profiles, reviews, a letters section, and a broad target audience. *Ray Gun*, regardless of the tremendous leeway given to Carson, still has to fit a certain amount of text in its pages in a format that imposes certain limits.

The astounding proliferation of new typefaces has no precedent in the history of typography. In

addition to the larger-than-ever selections offered by Adobe, Monotype, and Font Haus, hundreds of original typefaces are being designed every week by newer established foundries around the world. Font-generation software like Altsys's *Fontographer* has done for font creation what Quark XPress did for page design: made it possible for even the most humble PC owners to create a professional-caliber product at home easily and relatively inexpensively. In addition, with the low cost of commercial fonts (and the rampant spread of illegal copying), typefaces offered by the large foundries are now in the hands of more people than ever. This widespread availability of professional typefaces, as well as the unchecked spread of new type designs, has worked to provide support for the freedom that graphic designers are now demanding.

However, the sheer number of new fonts being produced increases the pressure for *newness* still more. As designers continue to churn out new font designs at breakneck speeds (and, incidentally, sell them to the public, as both *Emigre* and *Ray Gun* do) they tend to get dissatisfied with everything out there relatively quickly. And so do their readers. So the designers design more new fonts: In the case of *Emigre*, each new issue generally features one or more never-before-seen fonts, which adds to the excitement and unpredictability that the magazine's readers expect. An issue of *Ray Gun* can feature dozens of new fonts, though many of these are digitally generated hybrids created for one spread only. New *Emigre* Fonts releases are eagerly gobbled up by hungry graphic designers looking for something different. Like everything else in the world of cutting-edge typography, their half-life tends to be fairly short,

continued on 63

THAT NIGHT IN BEDROCK

Authentic American Satire
by Wayne Alan Brenner

That night in Bedrock, the wind low between enormous dolmen-like houses, Fred dreamed that he was making love to his neighbor's wife. How the circumstance had come about he did not know. He could remember no immediate past in the dream, could conjure no scenario leading up to the present hollowing of his marriage vows and hers. He was, however, enjoying himself immensely.

Betty moved excitedly below him, making rough animal noises in her throat as he rode her smooth young body. She was much louder than his own wife, Wilma (who was often completely silent during sex), and in the dream, Betty's body was perfect, almost cartoonlike in its soft curves of warm, yielding flesh. Fred felt briefly jealous of his neighbor, thinking (as the rhythm of his thrusts accelerated) about Barney and how the man could have this any old time he wanted. Barney, his nearest and dearest friend, yes, whom he loved without reserve... but who didn't deserve such an exquisite fuck as this hellcat, now writhing, actually writhing, in pleasure, her fingernails raking private furrows across Fred's broad back.

Betty began to thrash. Her jerking

head flung tears from her closed eyes and she began loudly calling Fred's name as she approached climax. Fred, speeding toward his own consummation, felt a guilty fear, worrying that their erotiphony would be heard by Barney or the other neighbors or, Gazoo forbid, Wilma herself; and he and Betty would be discovered in flagrante delicto, as they say, and it would be all over. Better a thousand nights of being locked out by the cat than to be discovered in bed with his neighbor's wife. Better to be the sheets on his quarry boss' roll of toilet paper than to have his life shattered by the revelation of this adultery. Where was Barney, anyway? he wondered. Where, for that matter, was Wilma?

"Fred? Fred?"

A hand pushed gently on his shoulder. Fred opened his eyes.

The room resolved in shallow darkness around him: the walls of rough stone, the pictures of Pebbles atop the old bureau, the phonograph bird asleep on its perch near the door. Wilma's face vague and luminous in the gloom. "Dear," said Wilma, concerned, "are you all right? You looked like you were having a nightmare."

"Yes," said Fred, "a nightmare. I was having a real bad nightmare. It was about — hell, I can't even remember. It was scaring me half to death and I can't even remember what it was about. Isn't that stupid?" He looked straight into her large eyes, trying to disregard the vivid memory of Betty, of rushing to orgasm inside her. "You

have a real dummy for a husband," he said, giving Wilma a lopsided smile.

She leaned close and rubbed her cheek against his perpetual stubble. "I'll bet it was those ribs at the drive-in tonight," she told him. "You always eat too much when we go there, and your poor stomach is always upset. It's a wonder that you haven't had any nightmares until now, Fred. You really should take better care of yourself, you know. All that brontosaurus meat is just..."

Fred covered her mouth with the fingers of his right hand. "I know, I know," he said. "You're so good to me, honey," he said, looking at her with a great feeling of affection and something not far removed from awe — an irrational awe that she could still love him after a dreamtime infidelity she wasn't even aware of. "Have I told you that I think about that a lot? About how much you care about me and Pebbles and — hell, honey — even about Dino? I do, I really do."

"You do?" said Wilma. "Even after all these years?"

Fred nodded. "Not a day goes by," he said.

Wilma kissed him, and moved her hands beneath the sheets to where his dick lay hard against the mattress. "Fred..." she said, gently stroking him.

"Wilma..."

That night in Bedrock, the wind low between enormous dolmen-like houses, Fred dreamed that he was making love to his. To his. To his neighbor's wife. X

Wayne Alan Brenner lives in Austin, Texas, where he spends too much time working for Cafe Armageddon and hanging out at the Flipnotics Coffee Space.

POCKET FULL OF HORSES

Paul
DiFilippo

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, IN THE PAGES OF CHARLES PLATT'S feisty little zine, *R&M*, (whose loss we all still daily lament), I had the opportunity to lambaste a semi-conscious trend toward Political Correctness among science fiction authors that was manifesting itself in a peculiar way. To wit: all female characters intended to be read sympathetically were depicted as having small breasts.

This was not only untrue to life and unnecessarily self-limiting, but also a foreclosing of the depiction of the personal enhancement options that bioengineering was sure to bring. The article was read and digested to a degree, because I have not seen so many boyish gamines disporting themselves among the pages of science fiction lately. Or, at least they've been counterbalanced by a more representative set of female soma types.

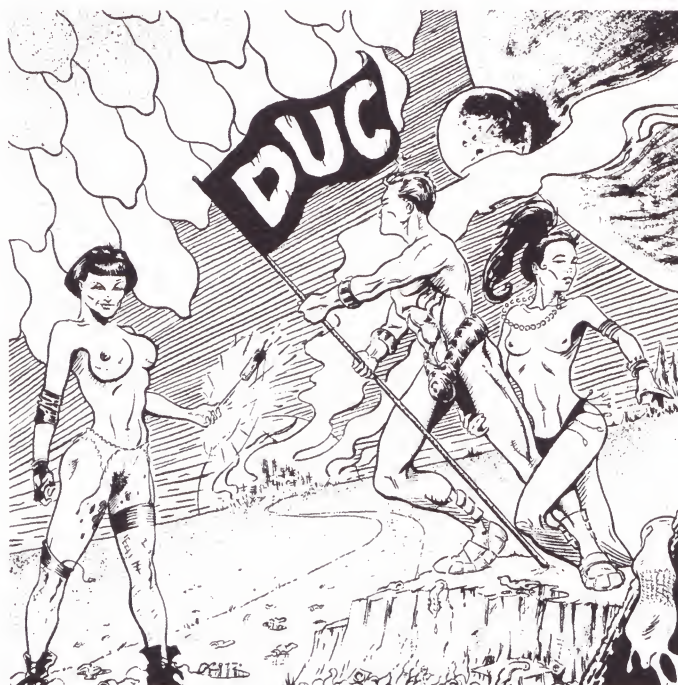
But now I find that I must raise objections to yet another unthinking stereotype of a biological sort, an overused talisman that keeps popping up in descriptive scenes throughout science fiction. I am referring, as you might have guessed from the title, to the image of the Discarded Used Condom (hereinafter abbreviated DUC). It was evoked most memorably in Prince's Little Red Corvette: "She had a pocket full of horses/Trojans, some of them used."

Whenever a science fiction author wishes to use a shorthand symbol for grunge and decadence, he or she fishes around in wallet or purse, and comes up with the dreaded DUC, and flops it down under our noses like a challenge to a duel. I believe that the first time an abandoned "French Letter" heaved into literary view

called for "a literature as vital as... cum," but I didn't mean it literally. There are a few problems with the good old DUC which now make me want to call for its immediate withdrawal from the loins of literature. First, it's gotten old. The DUC's shock value has been drained by sheer numbing repetition. Second, and more importantly, the DUC has undergone a symbolic transfiguration.

Whereas once it represented sin and bohemianism, its transformation to a symbol of conscience and conscious caring is now complete. The use of a condom now represents not decadence and danger, but safe sex and righteous behavior. There are probably more DUC's in a white-bread high school parking lot than there are, say, in a no-tell-motel dumpster. The true symbol of dangerous sex is now a vacancy, which is admittedly hard to portray with a simple sign.

Finally, the condom is definitely low-tech, and as such is not going to be around much longer. Any science



fiction was in a Roger Zelazny story some twenty-odd years ago (perhaps "This Immortal"?). Zelazny tried to evoke a sense of his hero's world-weariness, so he cited the "used cundums" (sic) littering a beach. Since then the "Coney Island Whitefish" has been an unvarying token of ennui, angst, bad upbringing, and general sloppiness that a desperate author could always whip out for some good old shock value. Cyberpunk, with its emphasis on lowlifes, has only increased the cachet of this literary objective correlative.

I know that in my "Ribofunk Manifesto" (see *BOING BOING* #2 — ed) I

fiction story set further in the future than, say, fifty years that portrays a landscape littered with DUC's is going to look awfully ridiculous very soon.

If I may propose — with tongue only slightly in cheek — an alternative to the Dirty Used Condom as a symbol of disdainful shock-the-bourgeoisie bohemianism, it would be a used tampon or sanitary napkin littering some science fiction roadway or shore. Just think of the waves of uneasiness, revulsion, and even horror that would flood the average reader at the mere mention of this symbol of female gestational power. It's worth a try. ✕

Illustration: Jason Spriggs



ASK DR. SERGIC

by Paco Xander Nathan

Dear Dr. Sergic: I watched TV late last night, *Star Trek* followed by *Flipper*. It got me to thinking — has anyone ever tried a Vulcan mind meld on a dolphin? — Kip Schnaack

Dear Kipper: There is an organization called AquaThought Foundation studying the brainwave patterns of humans during interactions with *Flipper* and his kind. They even have developed a nifty unit called the MindSet for clinical EEG brain mapping on a Mac. "It is imperative that neuroscience research is not limited to large organizations with lofty budgets... the science of the mind belongs to the people," says David Cole, who chairs the ATF. Check out: AquaThought Foundation, 22321 Susana Ave, Torrance, CA 90505, (310) 316-4563 "chinion@well.sf.ca.us."

Dear Dr. Sergic: I've been using a machine called Mastermind from Syntec Systems, and I'm pretty impressed. I use it to hypnotize friends with the help of relaxation suggestions after the program ends. It always works! Anyway, when I try it out on myself I sort of lose consciousness. It isn't bad or anything, but when I 'come to' I feel really relaxed. This is good, but I want to be conscious during the experience so I can see the colors that everyone talks about, and try visualizing stuff. I've tried using programs that go to higher frequencies like alpha on up, but still can't stay conscious during the experience. I've tried this at least 30 times and no go. Do you know what's wrong? — Cy Napse

Dear Cy: Look deeply into my eyes... mix in more beta, mix in more beta. Yeah, we've seen this happen at raves, too, where a

wide variety of people blend brain machine sessions with differing altered states: weird results. If you focus on theta and/or alpha, many people just pass out. Fortunately, some brain devices allow you to mix frequencies. (A quick call to Scott Menge at Syntec Systems, manufacturers of the Mastermind unit, confirms that several of their "Relax" programs ramp back into beta ranges — say up around at least 15-25 Hz — before ending.) Try out "Relax15" or "Relax25." Similar to classical hypnotism practice, where you ramp your victim, er, uh, subject back into beta/waking state at the end, and yet they still feel relaxed. You might work with nutrients too — like maybe some kind of Dork & Sundry products that blend lots of caffeine and phenylalanine. Otherwise, how about "additional factors" — have you been sleeping well before electro-dosing? Eating regularly? Getting plenty of sex? Now, when I click my heels twice, you will recover and not remember any of this, but still be able to enjoy brain machines without passing out. Click, click.

Dear Dr. Sergic: Hi, I just inherited several billion New Yen, and I've always wanted to explore lucid dreams. Where can I get additional information?— Lucy D. Reeming

Dear Lucille: Stephen LaBerge at Stanford University is the lucid dude of all time. He hangs at The Lucidity Institute, Box 2364, Stanford, CA 94309, (415) 851-0252. He's got a device called the DreamLight for only \$1,200, which purports to induce lucid dreaming, although you can never actually tell whether or not you're already dreaming lucidly, even as we discuss this (unless of course you pinch yourself and it really hurts.)

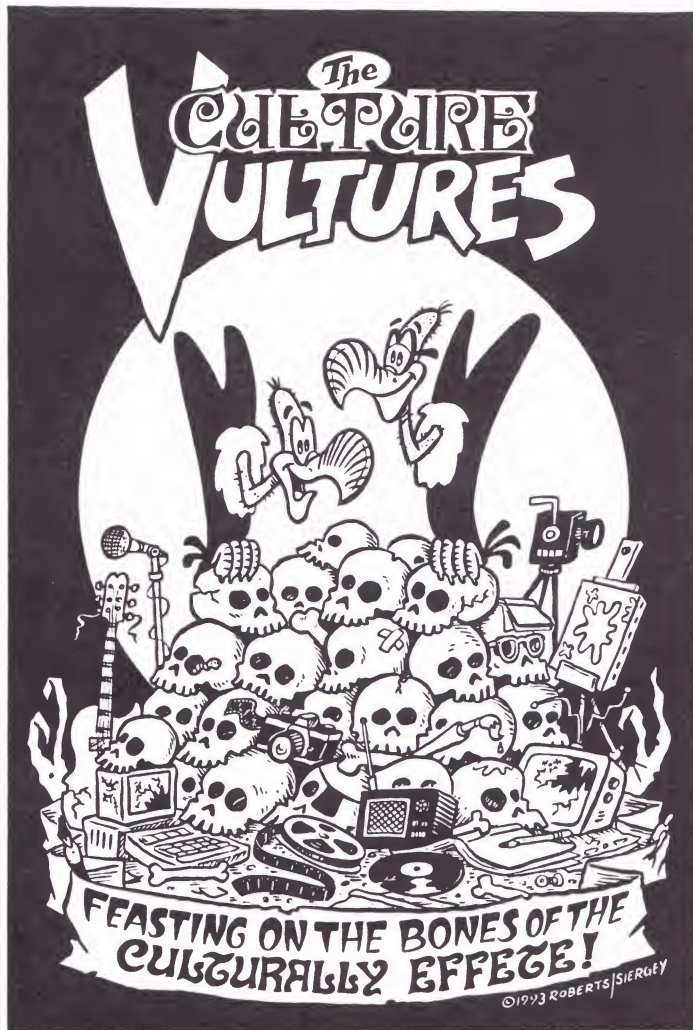
Dear Dr. Sergic: I'm looking for the current FDA policy on ordering non-approved drugs (such as smart drugs) from foreign countries. My governmental blue pages and telephone were of no help. Would you

be able to inform me? — The Cheshire Cat

Dear Chesh: Indeed, the elected officials have been rather fickle in stating our national policy toward smart drugs. Basically, you can import them for personal use, but you need to have a prescription from a licensed medical doctor. If THEY spot a package from a known smart drug vendor, they will send you a letter and hold the little package in sad, lonely custody until you produce the damn prescription. Also note that you cannot SELL most alleged smart drugs within the US. Lucky for us freedom-loving red-blooded American citizens, the FDA and their DEA bedfellows lack the resources to open each piece of personal mail entering the country. To further thwart the efforts of the cash-strapped and not-so-bright federal agents, some enterprising overseas smart drug suppliers have started filling orders in the US through handwritten "birthday" cards, rerouted through tiny, charming European villages. ✕

A PXN Post-It Gnote:
David Ross, the editor of *Urine Nation News*, came under harassment from his mega-corp employers for allegedly "spreading literature to encourage the use of illegal drugs" — an outright, honest-to-god lie. Frankly, these money grubbing oil mongers are just jealous of his way cool, wondrous, informative zine, which has a new name and more pages than ever before. Please show support for David by writing and/or subscribing:
Digit Press, PO Box 2149,
Roswell, GA 30077,
(404) 924-1393

Questions/Comments:
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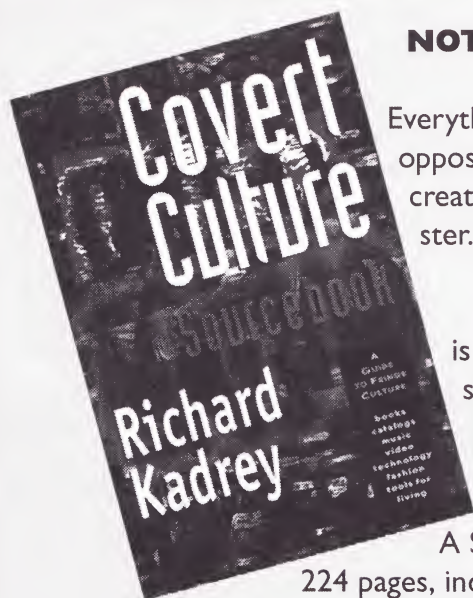


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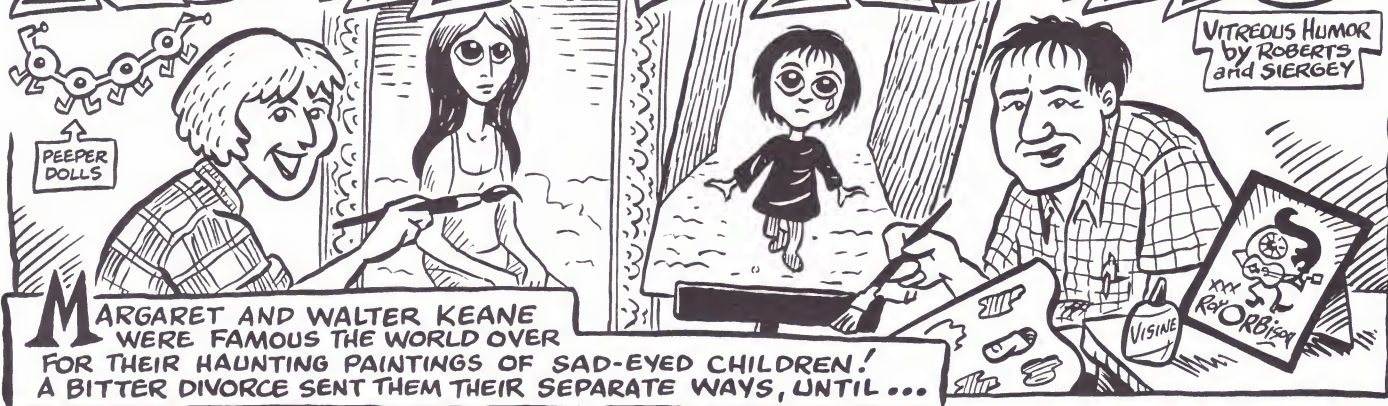
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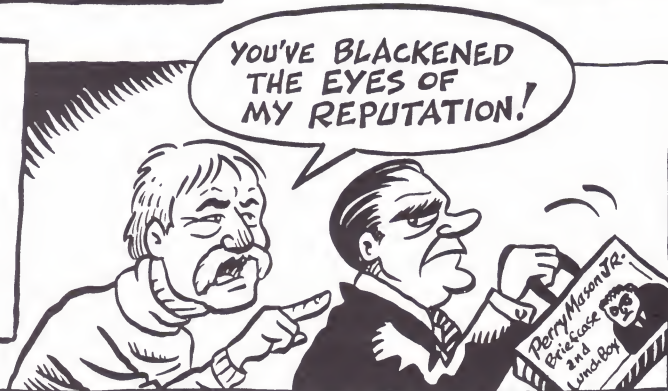
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Keane vs. Keane



1982, WHEN WALTER FILED A \$1.5 MILLION COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT SUIT AGAINST MARGARET FOR PUBLICLY CLAIMING THAT **SHE** ALONE HAD HELD THE BRUSH IN THE FAMILY.

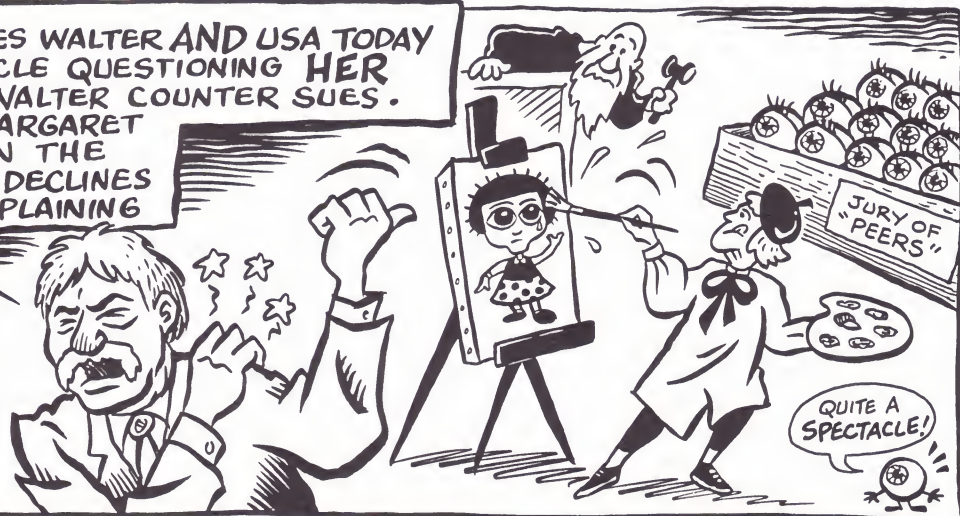
WALTER BLAMES HIS ATTORNEY'S FORGETTING TO FILE PROPER PAPER, WORK WHEN THE SUIT IS DISMISSED.



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"MARGARET CAN COPY ANYTHING, EVEN A REMBRANDT!"

OW! MY ARM!



13 DAYS INTO THE TRIAL, USA TODAY BACKS OUT, LEAVING WALTER TO ACT AS HIS OWN LAWYER. THOUGH LATER DROPPED FOR BEING EXCESSIVE, MARGARET IS AWARDED \$4 MILLION IN DAMAGES! THE VERDICT STANDS...

EX-MILLIONAIRE WALTER FILES FOR BANKRUPTCY AND IS FOUND IN CONTEMPT FOR CONCEALING HIS ASSETS.

"MR. KEANE, IF YOU REFUSE TO ANSWER ANY QUESTION, YOU WILL BE INCARCERATED... I THINK THE ONLY WAY WE ARE GOING TO GET YOUR ATTENTION IS TO PUT YOU IN PRISON."



WALTER CALLS IN AVID KEANE COLLECTOR AND FRIEND, WAYNE NEWTON TO TESTIFY ON HIS BEHALF...

"I HAD THE PLEASURE OF INTRODUCING WALTER KEANE TO AN AUDIENCE IN LAS VEGAS. THAT AUDIENCE STOOD UP WITH A STANDING OVATION FOR HIM! SO THE EFFECT THAT HE HAS HAD ON PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, REGARDLESS OF THE FACT THAT MAYBE HE IS A LITTLE ECCENTRIC..."

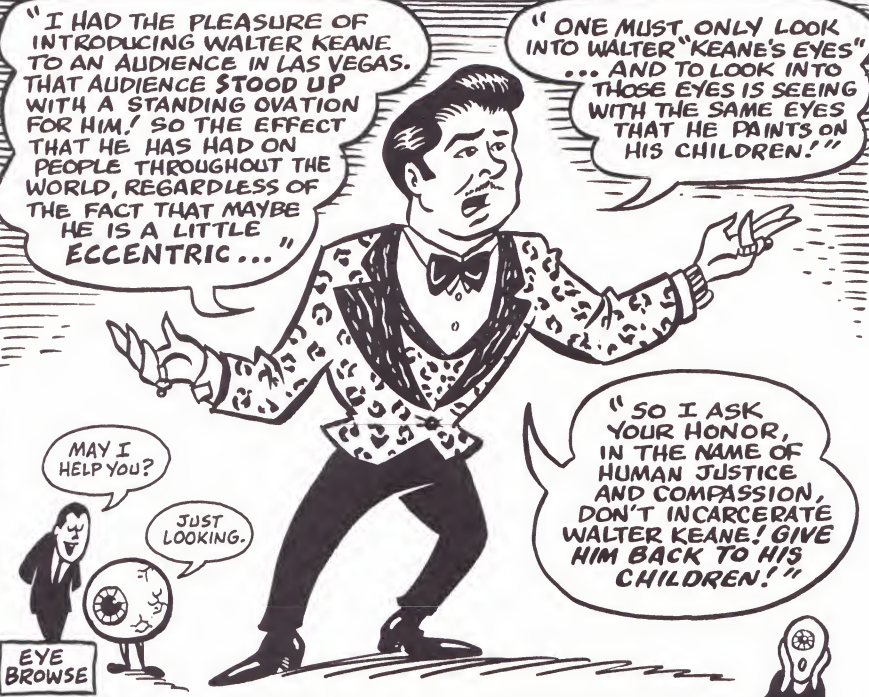
"ONE MUST ONLY LOOK INTO WALTER 'KEANE'S EYES'... AND TO LOOK INTO THOSE EYES IS SEEING WITH THE SAME EYES THAT HE PAINTS ON HIS CHILDREN."

MAY I HELP YOU?

JUST LOOKING.

EYE BROWSE

"SO I ASK YOUR HONOR, IN THE NAME OF HUMAN JUSTICE AND COMPASSION, DON'T INCARCERATE WALTER KEANE! GIVE HIM BACK TO HIS CHILDREN!"



MARGARET'S ATTORNEY RESPONDS...

"WHILE WALTER KEANE WAS OUT MEETING ALL THE HOLLYWOOD STARS, MARGARET KEANE WAS SPENDING 16 HOURS A DAY PAINTING... MR. NEWTON CARES FOR WALTER KEANE BECAUSE OF THE BIG EYED CHILDREN. MARGARET KEANE PAINTED THOSE CHILDREN AND THIS MAN STOLE THAT FROM HER!"

SHE'S GOT THE JURY RETINA PALM OF HER HAND!



TROUBLED BY EVIDENCE HE HEARS, WAYNE NEWTON PERSONALLY APOLOGIZES TO MARGARET FOR HIS "UNINFORMED TESTIMONY". NEWTON'S ATTORNEY GETS WALTER TO BE GRUDGINGLY SIGN AN AGREEMENT PREVENTING BOTH KEANES FROM PURSUING FURTHER LITIGATION...

GRUMBLE... GRIPE... I LISTED TA PAL AROUND WITH KIM NOVAK, Y'KNOW, AND DON DEFORE, F'CRISSAKE!

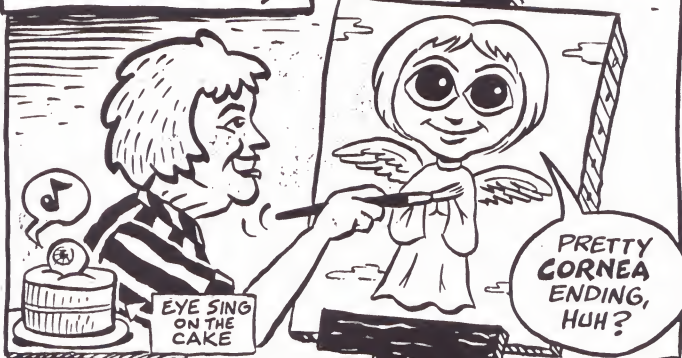
DANKE SCHÖN!

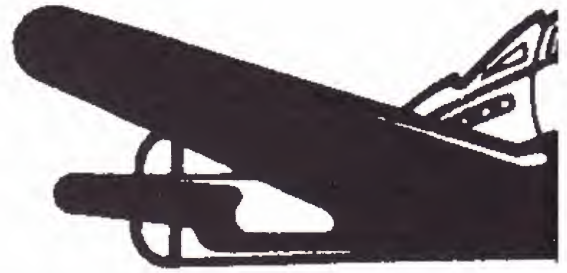
OW! MY ARM!

DESK TOP



MARGARET BECAME A JEHOVAH'S WITNESS AND OPENED HER OWN "KEANE EYES" GALLERY IN SAN FRANCISCO, WHERE HER ORIGINALS SELL FOR AS MUCH AS \$185,000. (THE CHILDREN SHE NOW PAINTS WEAR SMILES.)





PUNCHING HOLES



If you have a desire to get virtual but don't have gigabucks to burn, consider piloting one of the current crop of Mac Flight Simulators. These programs contain rich 3D worlds inhabited by autonomous agents (and your friends) via network or modem. Though these simulations' objectives are usually to bomb the scenery and murder your fellow cybernauts, most are open-ended to facilitate pleasure cruising for pure visual gratification. Go ahead. Use military technology for something nonviolent. It's fun! If you actually have an interest in the noble pursuit of aviation or in aerial dogfighting, these are worth a test flight. —Dr. Strangeloop

Falcon MC Spectrum Holobyte

This color enhancement of the classic Falcon F-16 simulator has roots in the Pentagon appropriations department. The original was developed for the Japanese MSX system and was ported to the Macintosh and Intel machines in 1987. The Falcon team then helped Perceptronics, a military contractor, spend some of your hard-earned money developing the Advanced Situational Awareness Trainer (ASAT). A few years and 200,000 dead Iraqis later, Falcon MC was published for the Macintosh. The degree of authenticity is astounding.

The Falcon world is a familiar one, smattered with mountains, rivers, lakes, nuclear power plants... real-world imagery. Once you're airborne, your primary activity will be looking around and taking in the scenery with Falcon's various

points of view, until you feel like blowing something up. You can peer in all directions from the comfort of your ejection seat or, more enjoyably, from the camera view, where you can watch yourself fly from any perspective. I'll admit to spending more than a little time just rolling and looping around, admiring the smoothly animated jet plane.

If you choose to accept the politics of this artificial world, you are fighting in a "border dispute," defending a weak nation from a strong one. Hmmmm. You can equip your plane with a wide array of weapons, including radar-guided and infra-red (heat-seeking) missiles, as well as free-fall and TV/laser-guided "smart" bombs. The virtual pilot can experience the greatest CNN Gulf War déjà-vu during a ground attack using TV bombs. Focusing on the F-16's CRT display, you see a closeup of your

target and a tiny firecracker homing in until the gratifying 8-bit color explosion fills the screen, accompanied by hundreds of imagined little cyber-screams. At a few points, the authenticity demands that we acknowledge real-world atrocities.

The autonomous forces you battle in the Falcon world are fairly sophisticated. Tank commanders make few evasive moves, relying on surface-to-air missiles and air support to keep you too busy to attack. Enemy aircraft are a different story. State-of-the-art Mig-29 Fulcrums are more than a match for the F-16, and they display strong "knowledge" of air-combat tactics. Instead of leading you on two-dimensional Top Gun style car-chases, these artificial bandits use all three dimensions liberally, rocketing skyward and diving for the deck between violent lateral jinks. I highly recommend closing on the tail of a bandit and not firing. Following the computer pilot through the artificial sky is a fascinating study in primitive AI.

Falcon MC's documentation is well written, concise, and ideologically neutral. Some programs ask you to bomb Iraq, while Falcon remains tenuously apolitical.



IN THE VIRTUAL SKY



by Jonathan Goodman
(Dr. Strangeloop)

Red Baron Sierra

Though the graphics and action of this WWI biplane simulation are first rate, its interface is a bit cumbersome. More of a mission-based game than a take-off-and-fly simulator, Red Baron plops you in the rickety seats of a variety of accurately-rendered Allied and German biplanes. Unlike many jet simulators in which you simply punch the throttle and climb and turn at will, here you actually pilot the plane while completing your mission.

Unfortunately the developers had a preoccupation with the GUI, which resulted in slow-appearing menu screens and frequent mouseclicks to get to the action. Once you do, the animation is smooth and attractive (if your CPU is fairly speedy), especially the other planes' details, complete with their Royal Air Corp. insignias and Hun Iron Crosses. The cockpit is a simple recreation of the original wood and mechanical gauges.

Missions include various patrols, attacks on Zeppelins, and one-on-one dogfights. You can fly for the Allies or Germany, in their respective planes, dueling with

famous aces including the Baron Von Richthofen himself. The documentation available offers a concise history of WWI and the dawn of military aviation. It's a noble joust in the sky with no TVs or lasers whatsoever. Recommended.

Microsoft Flight Simulator 4.0 Microsoft Corp.

For those of you who enjoy simulations but consider war games the software moral equivalent of cap guns and G.I. Joe, the Gates clan offers MS Flight Simulator, an extremely complex and realistic civil aviation simulator. A favorite of corporate desk-jockeys, MS Flight Simulator recreates in detail the rituals of the private pilot, including air traffic, radio communications, VOR navigation, and a slew of other technical procedures—and hassles.

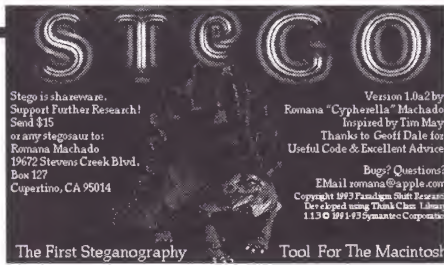
The coolest thing about this pleasure-cruising simulation is the scenery database, which contains airports and cities in U.S. regions and, with the addition of supplemental scenery disks, the majority of the developed world, all depicted in reasonably detailed cartoon

technicolor.

You begin your flight on the runway at Chicago's O'Hare airport by default, ready to buzz the skyscrapers of the recreated metropolis. A virtual hangarful of planes awaits you, from single-prop Cessnas to Learjets to experimental prototypes that you can customize. MS Flight Simulator's aeronautical model is based on laws of aerodynamics, so you will need to read some of the documentation on the basics of flight if you're to avoid stalls, spins, carburetor ice, and crash landings. You can even turn on simulated weather, complete with gusty winds, cloud banks, and storm fronts.

One attractive aspect of this program is that unlike the others reviewed here, MS Flight Simulator does not monopolize your CPU. Ordinary Mac windows permit you to resize your view while flying and even run in the background. This allows you to write a letter on half the screen (in MS Word, of course) while your Learjet crashes into the Statue of Liberty on the other. Excellent for covert recreation on company time. Future versions promise photorealistic scenery and a network option. ✕

Stego & Cypherella



*A Cypherpunk Goddess Presents Us With
Digital Fruit From Her Tree of Knowledge*

by Sandy Sandfort

Cypherella is an ace software developer who has unleashed a subversive program called Stego, a different kind of encryption software that works because snoops can't even tell that you are using encryption software.

How's it work? Let's say Slick Willie wants to hide his voluminous Little Black Book where no one can find it. If he puts it in an encrypted file on his White House personal computer, anybody who looks at the files on his hard disk can tell that he is trying to hide something, and by today's unfortunate "if you have something to hide, you must be guilty" standards he'd catch hell from the press. Enter Stego.

The Stego program uses steganography, a method of disguising messages within other media. What that means, in practical terms (So Prez can understand) is that he can camouflage his secret Little Black Book inside something innocuous: one of Hillary's Vogue pictures scanned into a Mac PICT file would do nicely.

Every picture stored on a computer is made up of pixels (picture elements). Depending on how many shades of gray or hues of color you want to have, a pixel can be expressed using 8, 16, 32 or even more bits. If the least significant bit

is changed, the shade of the pixel is altered only one-256th, one-65,000th or even less. No human eye could tell the difference.

What Stego does, is hijack the least significant bit in each pixel of a picture. It uses that bit to store one bit of a secret message or file. Because digitized pictures have lots of pixels, it's possible to store lots of data in a single picture.

But what if Hillary also has a copy of Stego? (She might want to hide her Little Black Book too, you know.) Bill could get busted. And then he'd really catch hell. Bill should first use a standard encryption program (like Phil Zimmermann's "Pretty Good Privacy") to encrypt his LBB before he Stegos the PICT file.

Pretty cool, huh? Bob Packwood would've paid thousands for it. But because Cypherella wants you to have Stego, she is offering it as shareware. You get it for free. If you like it, you can send her a registration fee of \$15. For that you'll get the latest updates plus special features and other valuable goodies.

Software this great could only come from a wicked cool cypherpunk goddess like Cypherella. Also known as Romana Machado (and sometimes "Mistress" Romana, Katrina, or just plain Kate), she's an avid reader of science fiction, and has tried everything from ballet to Trekkie fandom; from drug experimentation to medical research; from singing in baroque choral groups to posing for Playboy

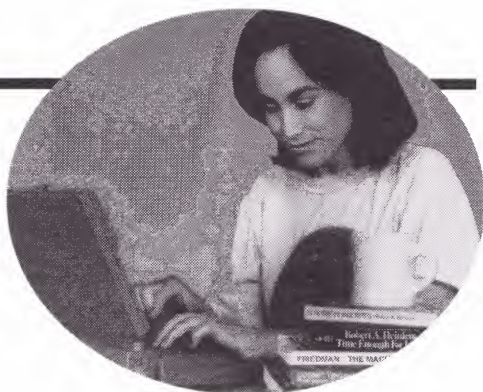


Photo: D. Cellers

(November 1985). When she's not writing cunning encryption programs, she keeps herself busy as a software consultant, a model, and sometime movie extra. She's designed and made black leather wrist braces to prevent or alleviate carpal tunnel syndrome.

It's only natural that she would eventually hook up with the Cypherpunks. This self-mockingly-named group vigorously promotes the use of strong encryption to preserve personal privacy and freedom. It includes some real hotshots in mathematics, cryptography and computer science. Yet only a dozen or so of the several hundred Cypherpunks have actually worked on cryptographic projects. Of those, only Cypherella's Stego and a small handful of others have actually been finished.

Stego was written for the Macintosh. PC and other versions may soon be available. To get your copy of Stego, you can FTP it from: [sumex-aim.stanford.edu](ftp://sumex-aim.stanford.edu), in the `info-mac/Recent` directory as `stego-10a2.hqx` ✕

To get Stego on a Mac disk, send \$15 to: Romana Machado: 19672 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 127, Cupertino, CA 95014.
e-mail: romana@apple.com

REVIEW:

Culture Jamming, Hacking, Slashing, and Sniping in the Empire of Signs

by Mark Dery

This is another in the Open Magazine Pamphlet Series that includes such works as *Seizing the Media*, the *Manifesto of the Immediast Underground*, Mike Davis' *The Ecology of Fear*, and Noam Chomsky's *Media Control: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*.

In *Culture Jamming*, cultural critic Mark Dery presents an overview of acts of cultural provocation gathered under the banner of culture jamming. Dery defines cultural jamming as:

"... artistic terrorism directed against an ever more intrusive, instrumental technoculture whose operant mode is the manufacture of consent through the manipulation of symbols. 'Jamming' is CB slang for the illegal practice of interrupting radio broadcasts or conversations between fellow hams; 'culture jamming' intrudes on the intruders, investing ads, newscasts, and other media artifacts with revolutionary meanings.

The term 'cultural jamming' was first used by the collage band Negativland to describe billboard alteration, and other forms of media sabotage. On *Jamcon '84*, a bandmember observes, 'As awareness of how the media environment we occupy affects and directs our inner life grows, some resist...The skillfully reworked billboard... directs the public viewer to a consideration of the original corporate strategy. The studio for the cultural jammer is the world at large.'

The pamphlet is satisfactory in its attempt to define the many forms that culture jamming takes, and is a good, albeit short, primer for the uninitiated and the neophyte. Veteran jammers may find it to be frustratingly short and its coverage narrow, but it's still worth the read. It does provide useful insights into the scholastic and critical view of the art form. Some people may find themselves put off by the "pomo" overtones, but all in all, that is kept to a minimum.

The parts that had the most impact on me were Dery's chilling look back at the horrific spectacle of the Gulf War and the reminder of just how large the "moats" around the media have really become. Anyone who experienced first hand the appalling and blatant manipulation of images during that time will recall the frustration and anger it engendered, as well as the strengthening of our resolve to "go out and kick some media butt."

At times *Culture Jamming* seems to aspire to being a soaring propagandant, à la Raoul Vaneigem or Hakim Bey, but it falls short of this goal, lacking both the subject matter and the poetics to carry off such a feat. As a series of short takes on such subjects as: sniping, subvertising, media hoaxing, audio agitprop, billboard banditry, guerrilla semiotics, BBSs and E-zines, *Culture Jamming* works nicely. It should provide an excellent springboard for anyone wishing to explore this fascinating form of art and revolt. One can only hope that Mr. Dery, or someone, will go on to research and produce an in-depth work on the subject.

There are some gems in the endnotes and information sections, too. (Note: The *Retrofuturism* journal listed in the endnotes is now sadly defunct.) — Joseph Matheny

Open Magazine Pamphlet Series #25, \$4, 16 pp. P.O. Box 2726, Westfield, NJ 07091 USA

FICTION THAT BLEEDS TRUTH

by Jon Lebkowsky

WILLIAM GIBSON'S

VIRTUAL LIGHT

The Virtual Light "TM" instrumentation I developed proves that it is possible to produce optical sensations directly in the eye without the use of photons...Under the proper lighting conditions virtual light effects are actually superimposed by the viewer to appear visually combined with optically originated images seen with open eyes. — Stephen Beck, Mondo 2000, Summer 1990

Virtual Plot

A courier named Chevette is making a delivery to a marathon party in an opulent, hypersecure San Francisco high-rise when she's harassed by a drunken scumbag. Pissed off, she picks his pocket, and later finds that she's swiped a pair of 'virtual light' specs with a smart virtual reality that overlays any view of the city with a projection of proposed urban redesign. Somebody, it seems, is planning a postquake reconstruction of San Francisco without going through the... uh... normal channels.

Meanwhile a cop named Rydell falls from grace after a couple of embarrassing incidents, or accidents. He can no longer get a 'real' police job, and he's bombed as a security guard as well. However, he's been offered a last-chance-redemption job with his company, coincidentally the same huge security outfit that was guarding the building when the VR specs were lifted...

Those are the threads that form Gibson's tight little plot, which is as neat as sliced bread, but plot isn't what's important about *Virtual Light*. What makes Gibson's fiction a cut above middle-of-the-road sci-fi is that he creates three-dimensional characters and subtly detailed environments that have the same force as the concepts driving his prose.

Old Time Religion

Gibson's past fiction has featured 'high tech low life' characters, but Rydell and the others in *Virtual Light* are more of the 'slacker' phenotype. They come from variable middle-class backgrounds, and they're merely surviving in an increasingly fragmented, hostile, and demented world. What holds

this world together is *media*, specifically television and its derivations. This fiction bleeds truth: if your eyes are open and your brain is sufficiently tweaked, you know that the televirtual has replaced the church as social glue and vortex of transhuman power. Gibson the satirist is showing us the *ad absurdum* of the seeds we're sowing when he posits a spiritual practice through which God is revealed, in repetitive viewings of old films. Rydell's friend Sublett, a heretic within this sect, is the one character who seems to be working through the abstract moral dilemma that we associate with religion vs. truth. "I still believe in the Lord, Berry," he says, "and I know I've seen his face in the media, just like Reverend Fallon teaches. I have. But the rest of it, I swear, it might as well be a flat-out hustle." Echoes of the *700 Club*, Jimmy Swaggart, or any Sunday morning on God TV...

Another aspect of this koan is the "Shapely" legend that's pieced together from casual references throughout the book. Shapely is a contemporary Christ, a murdered savior who, in a sense, died for the sins of all. His blood carried a living vaccine which would cure AIDS. He's murdered by fundamentalist zealots who view AIDS as "God's vengeance on sinners and the unclean," a vengeance which Shapely's antiviral has effectively blocked. In *Virtual Light*, we see Shapely passing from reality into legend, and we see this from a perspective that illuminates the tension between history and the making of mythology.

Grow Yer Own

"Then the Germans came in, maybe two years later, sold 'em on nanomech, how to build the new tunnel. Be cheap, carry cars and a mag-lev. And nobody believed how fast they could do it... Little tiny machines crawling around in there, hard as diamonds: tied it all together tight, and bam, there's your tunnel."

This is the voice of Chevette's roommate and mentor, Skinner, whose ongoing

interview with the academic Yamazaki forms the backbone of the book. He's an old codger who's taken Chevette in to live in his room high up in a tower on the Oakland Bay Bridge. The bridge, ruined by earthquake, is now occupied by homeless refugees from San Francisco and Oakland. Skinner is explaining how the bridge was replaced, which is also how the city of Tokyo is being reconstructed following its own

earthquake — structures not built, but grown "nanomechanically."

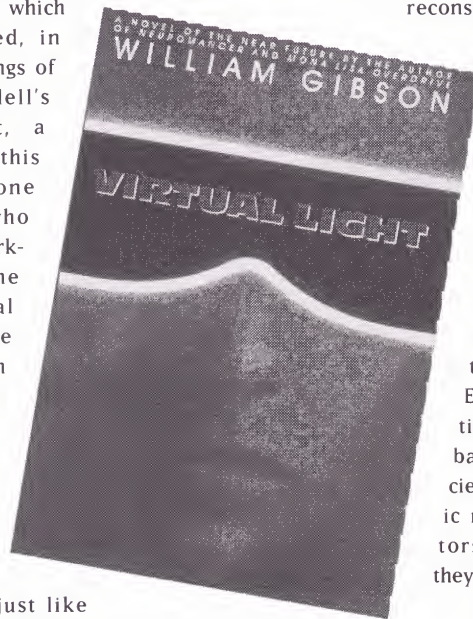
"They're going to rebuild San Francisco. From the ground up, basically. Like they're doing to Tokyo. They'll start by layering a grid of seventeen complexes into the existing infrastructure. Eighty-story office/residential, retail/residence in the base. Completely self-sufficient. Variable-pitch parabolic reflectors, steam-generators. New buildings, man: they'll eat their own sewage."

"Who'll eat sewage?"

"The buildings. They're going to grow them, Rydell. Like they're doing now in Tokyo. Like the mag-lev tunnel."

This is what the virtual light goggles reveal, a design for a reconstructed San Francisco... and that's what makes them so valuable. They show where the prime real estate will be, crucial information for real estate investors who want to buy ahead. Exactly who these goggles belong to, we don't know, though it's clear that the owner is ruthless and powerful. There are two entities in particular that are more powerful: the Republic of Desire, a group of mercenary hackers who can bend technology to their will, and the media networks, who can massage public opinion as they're raking in advertising bucks. Sound familiar?

Slipstream, Bruce Sterling calls it, an accelerated mainstream that morphs reality in the sci-fi way, but is no longer genreified as brain food for geeks. Slipstream's origins are in media, like the face of the new god. Whether this means that we've merged with the image, or the image has leaked into our daily duit, I couldn't say... but I am reminded of the chapter headers from Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, their graphic of sprocket holes. Reality is so many explosive molecular iterations, like frames of a film... god is in the media... right, so fucking RIGHT! X





Nurse Freckle's pranktime

Nurse Freckle Says: I am a registered nurse. I am also a prankster! I enjoy interrupting the daily routines of office drones by throwing nerf-like monkey wrenches into their lives. Won't you please help me in my quest to demolish serious culture? Send your prank ideas to *boING boING*. But don't you dare try to prank me! I hate it when somebody screws with my life!

■ If a rabid married couple were shrieking at each other, foaming at the mouth about an infidelity problem at 4 AM, and they happened to be staying in the hotel room next to you, what would you do? You *could* call the hotel manager and try to get a muzzle slapped on the inconsiderate loudmouths. Then you'd lose sleep from the noise, become a grouchy slug the following day, and simply shrug off the previous night as being in the wrong place at the wrong time. HOW BORING! Don't be a passive victim to a stranger's despicable behavior! Make Nurse Freckle proud! If high-drama is keeping you awake, join the party and have some fun.

The following is a true story from Petunia (name has been changed) who handled this same situation with the playful devilish verve Nurse Freckle would like to instill in all of us. The Nurse proudly presents the *Pranktime Porcelain Pig Award* to this spirited young prankster.

Petunia is an erotic dancer who travels around the country with her bodyguard, Bruno (name has been changed) to perform at various night clubs. A couple of months ago, on one of these trips, Bruno was awakened by some godawful losers screaming at each other in the hotel room next door. Instantly fascinated, Bruno grabbed a glass from the bathroom, which he held against the adjoining wall to better hear the real-life soap opera. This is what he heard:

"Don't lie to me, Sam! I know you've been sleeping with her!"

"That's not true, Sugar! We work together and nothing else, I swear!"

"Then how come you took her on that trip to Las Vegas last month?"

"It was business and nothing more. Honest!"

"How can you stand there and lie to me like that? I know you prefer her 109-pound figure to my 148-pound body. Why can't you just admit you're fucking Suzy?"

"Oh Bonnie, please. . ."

And on and on they went, for at least an hour.

The following morning Bruno relayed the story to Petunia, who couldn't let such a gem of a pranking opportunity pass them by. She made a bee-line to the gift store, bought one of the girlie magazines, and brought Bruno up to her room to let him in on her plan.

The pranksters ripped out a photo of a silicon-laden model from the XXX rag, which Petunia used as stationery. She then composed a love-letter, which said, "Dear Sam, I got a room here and would love to see you. You've

got to get rid of Bonnie and meet my 109-pound body in the lobby tomorrow at noon. Waiting in heat, Suzy." Bruno then slid the summons under his neighbor's door, and the two conspirators giggled all the way to the dance club.

But the fun had just begun. A few hours after Bruno went to sleep that night, he was awakened with a shrill "She's here!!!"

Apparently the Missus had gotten to the invitation first. A high-pitched row then ensued between the husband and the wife, and Bruno skipped to the wall, glass in hand. He shivered with excitement as he heard the stuttering husband try to worm himself out of the sticky situation. "This has got to be a cruel joke someone is playing on me! Please, Sugarplum, you've got to believe me this time..."

Realizing his pleading was getting him nowhere, the defensive hubby suddenly became irate, and pointed the finger at Sugarplum.

"You did this, didn't you? Why you sneaky little bitch. You're trying to set me up! Well it's not going to work!"

The couple was at each other's throats, like two angry wild boars, and Bruno was

beside himself with glee.

"You pig! Don't turn this thing around. I'm going to wait in that lobby tomorrow, and we'll just see who's pulling the wool over whose eyes!"

"Fine! I'll wait there with you," the hubby said with a quiver in his voice.

Then the husband called the security guards, who came to the room immediately. The hyper couple each relayed their side of the story, while security tried to play detective. "Well sir, it sounds like an inside job. We'll get a handwriting analysis and fingerprints from everyone in the hotel. We'll catch the culprits. Dontcha worry."

When security left, Bruno put his eye up to the peephole, and caught a glimpse of the men chortling past his door. They were as amused as Bruno.

Bruno was about to call it a night, when he heard, "I know! It must be the people next door to us! They must have heard our fight the night before!"

The room closed in on Bruno. His vision blurred, and the thumping in his chest hurt his ears. He leaped into bed and threw the covers over his head, waiting for the hours to pass until it was time to wake up Petunia. Finally he relayed the night's events, and Petunia admitted that she was a little nervous herself. But the pranksters kept their cool while they packed their things and slipped into the elevator and down to the lobby. Petunia did the best she could to alter her signature when checking out.

When they finally made it on the plane, Petunia and Bruno let out their breath and fell into a fit of hysterics. At noon, while the plane was soaring high in the sky, the pranksters amused each other with their imagined tales about what was happening at that moment in the hotel lobby.

— Carla Sinclair X

Here's another fun trick Petunia and Bruno like to play to keep their business trips interesting, which anyone can perform at any time, any place: Petunia brings 8 x 10s of some young, aspiring sap who's trying to break into the porn biz. She pinches a stack of these every time she visits her dance agent. (You can use photos of anything that would confuse or stun the average person's brain synapses). One time she got a photo of an over-excited lad who could have doubled for Sean Cassidy as a naked Hardy Boy with a 12-inch vibrator. Before departing the plane, she taped the photo to her meal tray on the seat in front of her. Then she folded the tray to its upright locked positions, and beamed with pleasure, knowing that the next passenger to take that seat was in for a surprise.

R.U. SiRiUS' GUIDE TO

Nostalgia sucks. All us *cool* people agree. On the other hand, as life in the nineties becomes increasingly more demented and unlivable, even you might find yourself pining for a time when the appropriate-dress issue in high school was whether boys should be allowed to wear mascara, and not whether girls should be allowed to carry an AK, or if a handgun should suffice.

So they're repackaging the seventies for us. And they're doing it with a knowing, doesn't-this-make-you-wanna-puke nudge 'n wink. But this ol' fart wants to let you gen-x brats in on a little secret: The seventies actually *were* cool. Much cooler than the bally-hooed sixties. There was more sex in the seventies, more tolerance, the right wing was completely in retreat, Richard Nixon was still a pig, and cocaine wasn't bad for your health yet! In the mid-seventies it was possible to believe that the whole country was moderately hip — and if that wasn't enough, Punk was coming along to kick moderately hip's laidback butt.

So how did we get from a time when lipstick boys smoked pot in the White House with the Republican President's son while Secret Service agents smiled on... to a time when wanting to fuck a teenager is more horrible than lobbing some *intelligent* bombs at foreigners? How did we get from a time when the biggest problem was lame 5-minute guitar solos on the radio to a time when the Reverend Wildmon rules the airwaves? I know you've been asking yourself *just* these questions. Which is why I'm gonna now letcha know just how we blew it, back in...

The Seventies



Photo: Debra McClinton

THE ALTERNATIVE '70S



1970-1971:

The Time is Right for Fighting in the Streets, Boy... er — Womyn!

Pass out the guns and ammo
We're gonna blast our way through here
We've got to get together sooner or later
Because the revolution's here

And you know that it's right

— "Something In The Air" by Thunderclap
Neumann, #1 on the Hit Parade during the
summer of '71



"For a
period of about
five years, the
right wing and
its supposedly-
silent majority
actually shut
the fuck up."

The sixties started in
1964 when the
Beatles toured America
and ended in 1972 with
the re-election of
President Nixon, and
the realization that
Yippies and motley long-
haired ultraleftists just
couldn't get tens of thousands

of youngsters into the
streets to burn down
banks and throw
rocks at pigs any-
more. But to under-
stand the early '70s,
you've first got to
look at the late '60s.
For all of the media
hype about the '60s,
more than half of the
high school and col-
lege-age kids were
still living in the '50s
in the '60s. They
started living in the
'60s in 1969, and con-
tinued living there
through the early
'70s. Got it?

Listen. In 1968, a
Beatles song, *The Ballad
of John and Yoko*, was
banned by most
radio stations
because it had the
word "Christ" in it, for
Christ sake. OK, maybe
they actually banned it
because everybody

hated Yoko, but the point still
sticks—you just couldn't catch the

Butthole Surfers on MTV in those fabu-
lous hippie years.

But something kind of cool
happened right around '69. I saw it
at my high school (Binghamton NY
Central). In '67 - '68, everybody
wanted to kill us freeks (Hippies
thought the hippie image was too
wimpy even back then, ya punks...
We called ourselves freeks instead...
which now means girls who like to
fuck. Stop snickering, punk — you
wanna know what punk used to
mean?). Suddenly in 1969, everybody
was a freek. Guys who were punch-
ing me out for my anti-war buttons
last year were wearing Che Guevara
t-shirts. No: they never apologized
(and they never do).

Anyway, 1970-1971... there were
over 500 anti-establishment bomb-
ings nationwide. There were riots
on every single major college cam-
pus in America. The Bank of
America on Isla Vista was torched
and the happy students toasted
marshmallows on it, yes they did.
Eldridge Cleaver's exiled Black
Panther chapter, the Weather
Underground, the Yippies, and
Timothy Leary all together
announced an American govern-
ment-in-exile in Algiers (Try imag-
ining what the world would be like
had they won. Maybe there is a God).

Anyway, you get the picture. To
understand the early '70s, consider
the fact that generational unity was
so casually accepted that Alice
Cooper could sing about "us" in a
way that even Fugazi wouldn't
touch in these cynical and decen-
tralized times...

We've still got a long way to go
What's keeping us apart isn't selfishness
What's holding us together isn't love
— "We've Still Got A Long Way to Go" by Alice
Cooper, from *Love it to Death*, 1971

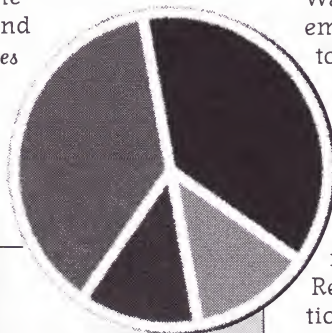
Speaking of Alice, his *Love it to
Death* and David Bowie's *Space Oddity*
may have announced the start of
the actual seventies.

1972-1974:

Walk on the Wild Side

Maybe it was the release of Andy Warhol's book, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol from A to B and Back Again*, (but then again maybe it wasn't, since I can't remember for sure when that book was released.) Either way, 1972 - 1974 saw the first hip rebellion against hippies and the pressures of political correctness.

It was called glam or glitter, and if you believe the persisting rumors that it was lame, go back and listen to the records. *Killer* and *Billion Dollar Babies* by Alice Cooper. *Transformer* and *Berlin* by Lou Reed.



It sure was a cool way to end history; with Rotten as the prophet, Vicious-the-hippy's-kid as the human sacrifice and McLaren selling the souvenirs.

Hunky Dory, *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust*, and *Aladdin Sane* by the master of the zeitgeist, Bowie. *Electric Warrior* and *Slider* by T Rex. *Stranded* by Roxy Music. *Mott* by Mott the Hoople. *New York Dolls'* first album. After years on acid, drinking beer was a mind-blowing revelation. After endless sucking up to the lesbian Kim Il Sung faction in proleware, what a joy to string on Mom's jewelry and head for the town gay bar. Yup, even in backwater Binghamton, the hip thing to do in the glam era was hang in gay bars. Even Dylan wore rouge!

OK, so the platforms were tacky,

pretentiousness was *de rigueur*, and Bowie caused the eventual outbreak of Suede. At least this first post-hippie boho revolt didn't dote day-in-day-out on the karma of Being There Then and the revolutionary significance of Health Food Collectives! Sheesh: ya had to be there... then.

1974-1976:

The Fall of America #1.0

Nixon Resigns! America Loses The Vietnam War! The Hippies Were Right! No exaggeration. The Watergate hearings shocked the empire temporarily to its senses. Try to understand that this was still a time when "the whole nation" might all actually be focused on the same "matters of significance," and the "silent majority" still held precious the illusion that we were a "free" country and not just a powerful one.

Revelations of lies and manipulation of the allegedly free press raged across the media. It ranged from the big lie that turned the Vietnam "conflict" into a raging fullscale war, to the use of police-state tactics and intelligence agencies for everything from spying on dissenters, to the most trivial personal agenda items of a raving paranoid president. So Nixon resigned and the US withdrew from Vietnam as victorious commies paraded through Saigon. It was, in the words of the still-vital William S. Burroughs, "the fall of America's Image Capital."

For a period of about five years, the right wing and its supposedly-silent majority actually shut the fuck up. Actors saluted the Viet Cong while accepting Oscars, with barely a peep from the Bob Hope/Frank Sinatra axis. Even my cousin Peter's conservative father started letting him smoke pot and snort coke at home. There was — if not less certainty than there is today — less enforcement of the pretense of certainty.

America sort of shrugged its shoulders in the mid-'70s and said the hippies were right. The hippies shrugged their shoulders as well. They hadn't yet realized that, with pot four times as strong, the daily morning joint would make them forget to get out of bed till evening.

Into this vacuum came the malaise-wonks, Jimmy Carter and Jerry Brown, telling the dazed American public what to expect. NOTHING!

Nothing except great fucking energetic rock and roll coming out of New York City. Patti Smith. The Ramones. Talking Heads. Richard Hell. Television. Blondie. To be on the NY club scene in '75 - '76 was to transcend the political moment for a musical trend that was *peculiar* in a way that no rock trend before or since has come close to matching.

1977-1978: No Future!

The Sex Pistols, of course, blew everything away in 1977. Here in the oh-so-self-aware '90s, we wander zombie-like amongst the shards, muttering about dysfunctionality and co-dependency, and life as only a stay of execution. In a "dead pan" world where the digitized records of our existence take precedence over spontaneous, energized, eroticized living, we work to build the machines that will displace us. But it sure was a cool way to end history; with Rotten as the prophet, Vicious-the-hippy's-kid as the human sacrifice and McLaren selling the souvenirs.

1979 - Present:

America Held Hostage!

Here in the '90s, in the Afternoon of the Living Dead, the real world is just like tabloid TV. The police state lurches on, throwing only the occasional downsized war, hardwiring the datascape, perfecting the politics of simulation and perceptual engineering. Now that her citizens are blank slates, defined by what we've quit doing, we're ready to be sold a redigitized dub of that decade of polyester and mindless hedonism, the SEVENTIES. Yeah, dude, hit it:

Whether you're a mother
Or whether you're a brother
You're just stayin' alive, stayin' alive
Inner city breakin' up
And everybody's shaken
But we're stayin' alive, stayin' alive
Huh huh huh huh stayin' alive.

— Feel-good sounds from those cocaine-addicted chipmunks, the Bee Gees: Saturday Night Fever ✕

slacking in the seventies

an interview with rick linklater

by Jon Lebkowski and Carla Sinclair

If someone had told me that hidden cameras had been installed behind the walls of my high school, and Rick Linklater had swiped the tapes to make *Dazed and Confused*, I would've believed every word. Everything from the feathered hair, and the stoned laughter, to the bleary-eyed apathy of these characters was plucked right out of my 1970s past. Linklater has a way with plucking. He did the same thing with his first feature film, *Slacker*, only that was about an older, perhaps more confused crowd from present day Austin.

Both of Linklater's films reek of cinema verite, although in reality they were scripted and blocked like any fictional film would be. So I thought it would be fun to make this interview look verite, when in fact I tweaked the hell out of it. After Jon had given us several lengthy interviews, I called Rick and had a brief but fun chat with him myself. Then I spliced my chat with Jon's interviews until I got one fluid conversation. I bet you wouldn't have been able to tell the difference! — Carla



Photo: Gramercy Pictures

■ Jon: Tell me your take on *Dazed and Confused*.

Rick: It's what I set out to do. *Dazed* was made more in the editing room than *Slacker*. The way it was shot, it was so obvious what it was going to be. *Dazed* has a big cast, 24 main characters, and a lot of cross-cutting. It's a lot more of a rock & roll movie, a lot of music and cutting to music and trying to get its energy. That was the most fun thing, the music. We used all period music, from May 28, '76 and before. So it's ZZ Top, Aerosmith, Ted Nugent... We couldn't get the rights to "Dazed and Confused," so we got another Zeppelin song.

Carla: I love the first scene showing a Camero packed with teenagers driving in slow motion to "Sweet Emotion."

I was under the influence of nitrous oxide getting my root canal, and that image came to my mind.

C: [laughs] It's something my sister and I would have put in the movie. I had a Camero, so it was perfect. One thing Mark and I noticed was there weren't any kids wearing braces. Did you overlook braces?

Actually there were some extras with braces. Most of the actors were professionals, and they didn't wear braces.

C: I just remember that in the '70s it seemed like everybody wore braces.

Yeah, it's like one out of five. I never had braces, just a retainer.

C: *Oh, retainers were fun! Were you able to click yours on and off your teeth with your tongue?*

Oh yeah, I'd pop it off with my tongue, and at lunch you'd just set it right on the side of your tray by your food.

C: *Yeah, and nobody would care because they all had one next to their trays too.*

J: *When we talked before, you compared Dazed and Confused to American Graffiti, as everything that Graffiti was not. In Dazed, as in Graffiti, you have people moving through the night — one night, isn't it?*

Yeah, one night. I call it *Slacker* with about four or five laps. You keep coming back to the same characters. All of them have their own story... not all of them, but the main ones. I think they're younger than the people in *Graffiti*. *Graffiti* was a whole other time and place, and they all seem so much older. They were making big life decisions. The oldest kids in *Dazed and Confused* are juniors in high school becoming seniors, so it's not like they can go out in the world and start changing things or be different people. They're stuck for at least another year.

J: *That's a weird twilight zone, actually. Yeah, the future's on the horizon, so there's a little angst about that, but they know they have one more year to kind of fuck around, so that's what they're doing. More than anything, it's about being stuck where you are, and being frustrated. The thing about small towns is how creative people can be with their own space and how humans create a livable system, no matter how bad things are. You create your own world that you can survive in, or that you can get by in, psychically, through the day. That's what you see happening in the movie. There's always talk about how being a teenager is such an oppressive situation, domestically and institutionally, so riding around is a statement of freedom.*

J: *Drinking beer...*

Drinking beer. Smoking a lot of pot, too. It's being hailed as a pro-pot movie. *High Times* had a half page on it... "hot movie

for the 90s!" There is a shitload of pot, but I just had to be honest, because for teenagers, smoking pot symbolized rebellion and freedom from those oppressive circumstances. I

don't have a real attitude one way or another about it, but kids

have been brought up with this "Just Say No" stuff, and it seems sort of Orwellian that it's been pumped into their heads without much thought. It seems so dangerous.

We're all self-medicating in some way or another constantly. I guess that's how I view drug use. It brings it out in a real matter-of-fact way, and doesn't have an attitude about it, one way or another. It's not saying it's good or bad.

J: *The people are just smoking dope as a cool thing to do.*

Yeah, as teenagers do. And smoking a lot of it. The party really cranks up, and they're all hitting on bongos, driving around, smoking... it's so weird. I feel like I've gotten away with a lot of stuff.

C: *What was in those joints they were smoking?*

Well it tasted real bad, but it smelled like real pot. It helped the atmosphere. But I don't know what it was. We had fake beer too, "near beer," and it tasted horrible too.

C: *How come you decided to do a movie about slackers, and '70s teenagers? Do you consider yourself to be in the slacker category?*

Uh, yeah, it was the culture I lived in I would say.

C: *Do you think the two groups are related?*

Yeah, you could say *Dazed* is like a prequel to *Slacker*. You could pick people out of *Dazed* that would be smart enough to go to grad school but disenchanted, knowing what they definitely didn't want to do. So for me it's kind of autobiographical, you know, a freshman in high school in '76. I'm interested in the teenage mindset, and the energy of being a teenager.

C: *Do you miss being a teen-ager?*

Oh God no! [laughs] I'm very glad to be out of it!

J: *We talked once before about Dazed and Confused, and I've thought since then about the condition of the teenager at that time, the postmodern teenager who's living in a world that's completely changed without anybody really acknowledging the changes, which result from the communications revolution and so forth.*

Do you get into that very much in Dazed? I think you feel that as an atmosphere. These kids have been through it, they grew up with TV, and they refer to that every now and then. They kill time... a lot of them are pretty cynical.

Our parents had their ears glued to the radio listening to FDR, a good man who was there to protect us... but by the time we were teenagers, it was like, "What crook is in office now?" There wasn't any of that belief in the institutions. But I see that as very healthy, a healthy cynicism, which is realistic... for the first time, I think the people who were coming of age were not in some dream about the world they were living in. They'd been slapped around, and they'd grown up realizing cold hard facts about life.

J: *Before, you couldn't really scrutinize the world you were living in the way we've been able to, actually since the '50s but more so since the '60s and '70s...* The information age. Mega information. That amazes me, that there are kids who are so plugged in, whereas back then you were reliant on mass media.

J: *I meet a lot of kids online, and I'm shocked when I learn how young some of them are. They're really bright, and they've figured things out that I hadn't figured out when I was 30 or 35... I was still working on these puzzles, and they know. I used to be impressed that we knew so much more than the college grads*

50 years ago by the time we had a high school education ... but now, by the time you're out of middle school, not only do you have the facts, but you have some of the understanding. You don't really have the maturity to handle the understanding, sometimes, and I think that really bowls 'em over. Hackers are a good example of that. A little knowledge is dangerous.

Yeah, some of these kids are living hooked up to a computer and a modem. Wiley Wiggins was telling me about a friend of his who's not in school anymore. He's young, about Wiley's age... quit school, and he's online all the time.

C: I heard you guys just spotted Wiley coming out of a drug store.

Coffee shop. It's kind of a slacker location, a happening place called Quackenbush. It has a big espresso bar.

C: Oh, I was there with Jon and the rest of the bOING bOING crew!

That's where Wiley was discovered. I like to say he's a fifteen year old with all the bad habits of a grad student. Smokes cigarettes and drinks espresso all day.

C: He seems like a natural talent.

Yeah, he was the one we picked out of several hundred people we met.

C: Did you pick anyone else off the street? Kind of. We recruited some kids from high school hallways.

C: Those lucky kids!

For fucking up their lives? (laughs)

C: Toward the beginning of the movie, the kids are at someone's house, and they're drinking out of these wax paper cups with bright yellow and orange swirls, and it was so nostalgic to see those again! They used to be so popular. How'd you remember those?

There are companies who give you that kind of period stuff. Or people in the art department find you stuff. Trying to keep the period accurate was fun.

J: How about violence in the film?

Yeah, it's a big part of it, actually. It's a real abuse of power, the seniors have initiation rituals into high school. I see it as a social-critique of the abuse of inherited power. It's pretty abusive, some people think it goes too far.

The girls get initiated more formally. They pick 'em up from school, the eighth graders, and lay 'em all out, dump stuff on 'em. It's this big party, run 'em through a car wash and that's it. The guys, however, are running for their lives, and the seniors have these paddles, and when they catch 'em, they beat 'em.

J: Sounds pretty realistic.

Yeah, and when they catch them, it's harsh. I put music behind and it's kind of ironic. Wiley [Wiggins] gets the hell beat out of him. They catch him after a baseball game. They bend him over a car and they all wear him out, to Alice Cooper's "No More Mr. Nice Guy." It's one of my favorite sequences in the movie, just the way it works, the cutting, and what I had in mind there... to pull it off felt good. It's harsh, but those were really cruel times.

J: Wiley said you had some realistic fight scenes.

Yeah, at the beer bust itself we had a very realistic fight scene. You get the whole pack mentality. There's going to be guys who, if they don't pick up a girl, will get into a fight. Every one of those parties I went to, inevitably somewhere in the evening there was some kind of fight or disturbance. Human design flaw, I would call it.

C: So what kind of projects do you have lined up?

A couple of different things. One's about two construction workers.

C: Why construction workers?

I've worked in construction. For now I'm still learning a lot. I feel more comfortable doing things I know really well. I wouldn't be any good at doing a *Die Hard* 5. I wouldn't be the right guy. But I can do things I know really well. I know what being a teenager in the '70s is like.

It's weird. Some people look at *Dazed* as an indictment of teenagehood. Teenagehood has a lot of energy, and

there's a certain fun and exuberance there, but at the same time it's pretty fucked up too. So I think *Dazed* has both. One thing I refuse to do with the movie is pass judgement. Some people look at it and say "cool!" And other people look at it and say, "God, look at all these people wasting their lives! How depressing." So it really comes down to where you're coming from.

C: Yeah, it just depends on how you interpret it. It's probably just an extension of the person who's watching it.

Yeah, absolutely.

J: There seems to be a pagan revival now, people who want to know their bodies, get back to their essential nature without acknowledging any distinction of spirit vs body.

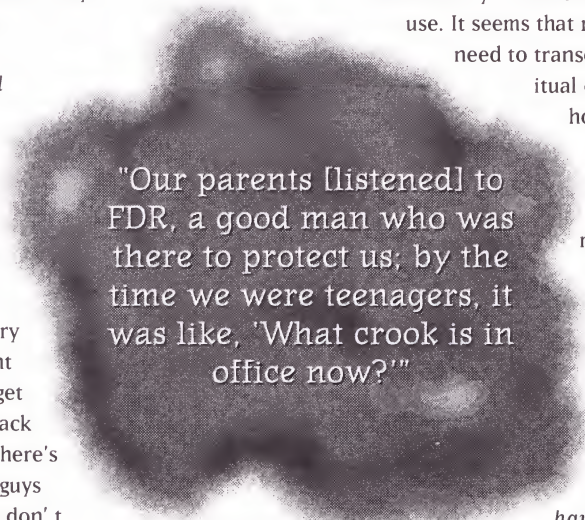
That's healthy. That comes back to drug use. It seems that most people have a need to transcend, to find a spiritual quality. It's just how that gets answered. You can be a Bible-thumper answering that need, or a new-ager. We all find our own rituals and our own methods of answering that spiritual need.

J: It's important to have something you can focus on that will take you away from your egocentric concerns. Right.

J: Where you can actually get beyond yourself. Christianity does that for some, but people who reject Christianity because it's been so dominant in our culture are having trouble finding where to plug in so that they can get outside themselves. A lot of them are doing twelve-step programs. Yeah! And you kind of need to... plug into some other kind of ideology. It could be any kind of dogmatic thing.

J: Cinema! [laughter]

Cinema, yeah, that's what I'm plugged into. It became my view of the whole world, I think. That's my twelve-step program. X



Don't ask me to remember the date on which I bumped into Anne Walker-McBay, (co-producer of *Dazed and Confused*) 'cause I'd have to fabricate one, and I do so hate to fib. I was wandering down the drag on some wet and bleary Sunday morning, looking for a transient I could hit up for money. Instead I stumbled across a determined woman walking energetically toward me, carrying a stack of blue cards. "Goddamn Scientologists," I thought to myself as I clenched a fist and prepared to punch her lights out.

"Uhm, excuse me, but would you like to be in a movie?" Well that screwed up everything.



Jason London

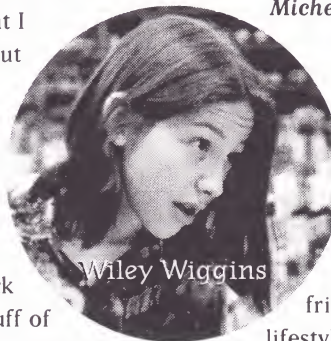
ing to myself, "What the hell does a nutty computer nerd kid from Texas have in common with this eloquent and together individual?" Some hours later, after I found out that I got the part, I wandered out of the building and dropped to the ground next to Milla Jovovich. Milla was applying a dose of lipstick with a little huff of dissatisfaction. "I've got to talk to my fucking agent, I don't need a bit part like this." Whatever, sister.

Some weeks later, when the actors and myself were staying in a hotel to conduct rehearsals, I quickly got the

became just like that character. The guy can act, and I really enjoyed working with him.

Michelle (Milla Jovovich):

Milla was thrust into stardom very early in her life, apparently, and lives in a very strange world. Somewhere inside, I think, there is a good person, as she did have a few bouts of genuinely friendly behavior. I fear her lifestyle.



Wiley Wiggins

Sabrina (Christin Hinojosa):

I first met Christin after I returned from the final casting. I'm sorry to say that I found her quite attractive and was initially a little bit overly flirtatious. I later discovered that she was a devout Catholic, when I was forced by

WORTHLESS COMMENTARY ON MY PROFOUNDLY WEIRD DAZED EXPERIENCE

BY WILEY WIGGINS

I had to quickly redirect the energy I was going to use to smack her one, and shake her hand instead. I hoped it didn't hurt her too much, but hey, that's the drawback of rigorous Kung-Fu training.

Seriously though. I went in hoping to score a few bucks as some mindless extra, and then, well, I met Rick (Linklater). He's INTENSELY subtle, focused, and observant. I wish he was my big brother, even though he sent me to the land of pink stucco and rotting palm trees... aka L.A. No real complaints though, they paid. I spent two days wandering around a bunch of scary, bitter cutthroat actors.

My most vivid memory is of the afternoon I was sitting in some little office in Universal City awaiting impending doom with a very calm and happy Anthony Rapp (Tony), and think-

scoop on them. Call me judgmental, but hey, it's amazing how much the actors resembled their characters (Rick evidently has a good eye for this sort of thing).



Rory Cochrane

Pink (Jason London):

A vital, weirdly wise and friendly guy who has missing toes on one foot from some childhood forklift accident. We spent a lot of time together, and I benefited from applying the advice he gave me in dealing with L.A. and such.

Slater (Rory Cochrane):

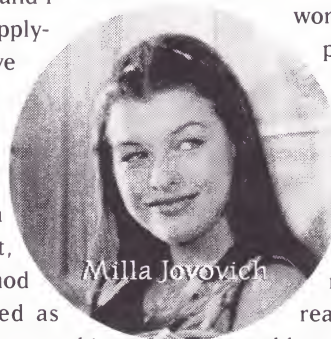
Though it took me a while to figure it out, Rory's the ultimate method actor. I had him pegged as being pretty much the same as his character, but we just did another movie together (*Love and a .45*), and he

her family to pray over some microwave pizzas at her house. I then wasted even more time trying to woo her little sister. Arrgh.

Despite what impressions I may have had of the cast, I loved working with them, even if it did mean staying up 'til 7:00 AM, climbing moon towers (I am slightly acrophobic), getting in weird situations with psycho extra girls (I won't go into that), and all the corporate crap that loomed over us.

As a final note, to all of you who wonder why the whole ad campaign for this movie SUCKED so bad, Grammercy came up with that crap in an effort to stir up some stupid controversy about drugs, and piss everyone involved off. Rick had a real poster and campaign ready, but screw that Rick, you told everyone we were assholes.

That about sums it up. Your pal, WILEY "WEEVIL" WIGGINS X



Milla Jovovich

the ignorant human's guide to the internet



by Sean Carton
Illustration by Ben Benjamin

In the first installment of *BOING BOING's* Internet Instruction for Imbeciles series (see "The Poor Human's Guide to the Internet," *BOING BOING* #11), ubiquitous net.spider Sean Carton gave us an introduction to the Internet and tips for cheap

access that were so clear and easy to follow that even us techno-simpletons could understand them. Here in part two, Sean offers more detailed instructions for using the wealth of cool resources available on the Net. — Gareth

FTP: Digital Shopping Spree

FTP stands for File Transfer Protocol. It sounds ugly and was probably coined by a nose-pickin' Unix freak after a 36-hour hack, but FTP is your single most important Internet tool. It allows you to copy a file from somebody else's computer into your computer. A great listing of telnet-able (see the next section) sites can be found in the "High-Weirdness by E-Mail" file, an incredibly cool and awesomely strange list covering the fringes of the Internet. It is available by FTP from: *nexus.yorku.ca* in the *pub/internet-info* directory.

Here's an example of how to get it (you type in the italics):

```
Ok (? for help): ftp nexus.yorku.ca
Connected to nexus.yorku.ca.
220 nexus.yorku.ca FTP server (SunOS
4.1) ready.
Name (nexus.yorku.ca:mark): anonymous
331 Guest login ok, send ident as pass-
word.
Password: anonymous
230 Guest login ok, access restrictions
apply.
ftp> cd /pub/Internet-info [Note: "cd" is
a command to change directories]
250 CWD command successful.
ftp> get high-weirdness [Note: "get" will
place the file in your personal directory]
200 PORT command successful.
150 ASCII data connection for high-
weirdness (198.93.4.10,53536) (37762
bytes).
```

```
226 ASCII Transfer complete.
local: high-weirdness remote: high-weird-
ness
38609 bytes received in 2.6 seconds (15
Kbytes/s)
ftp> quit
221 Goodbye.
```

Telnetting:

Beam me in, Scottie!

Telnet is a program designed to put you inside another computer so you can use its resources. It's useful if you have an Internet account on more than one system. Rather than hanging up the phone each time to dial up another Internet site, telnet lets you connect directly from one host to another.

Likewise, there are many "Internet Resources" or information servers that allow the general public to connect to them through telnet. Because resources vary so much, the only standard part of telnetting is the connect command itself: "telnet host.name." Telnet is your doorway to Gophers (information servers on a variety of subjects), Archie servers (Internet file finders), MUDs (Multi-User Domains or

the mail that you have received. It may look something like *figure 1*.

Basically, each line consists of a number identifying the message, the person sending it, the date it was sent, and the subject of the message. To read, say, number 1, just type "1" at the "mail" prompt and stand back! The message will go scrolling up your screen preceded by a bunch of junk indicating how the message got routed

post here, it goes out to just about every nethead on the planet! Also, because of the volume of message "traffic," USENET was designed for easy browsing. You can access a group, look at a list of subjects, and decide which loudmouths are worth your while to read. With the addition of a "killfile" and a "bozofilter," you can even have your system automatically filter out the junk info and geeks you don't want to be bothered with.

Newsgroups are organized into hierarchies that are grouped together by similar interests (at least that's the theory). The first part of the name indicates the most general subject, while each successive part indicates a more specific interest. For example, the group "alt.cyberpunk.tech" translates to an "alternative" group about cyberpunk that focuses on technical topics. The "alt" category contains most of the "fringe" groups, but is only one of the discussion topics on USENET. See *figure 2* for a list of some newsgroup types.

When you first enter the news-reader program by typing "rn" (or "nn", depending on your system), you'll find that your host, not wanting to make assumptions about your interests, has subscribed you to every newsgroup! You will be confronted with the first topic on USENET and asked if you want to read it. If you do, just hit return or type "y." If the topic doesn't look interesting, type "u" to unsubscribe yourself and move on to the next topic. Don't worry, if you unsubscribe to a topic that you want to look at later, just type "j" and the name of the group you want to subscribe to.

If you are a little handy with UNIX, you can use the editor to save yourself the hassle of unsubscribing to zillions of newsgroups by opening the ".news-rc" file at your host and replacing all the colons (:) next to the groups you don't want to read with exclamation points (!).

This tells the reader to skip those

#	From	Date	Subject
1 IN%	garethb2@aol.com	10-JUN-1993	You're A Turd!
2 IN%	garethb2@aol.com	10-JUN-1993	I'm a Turd!
3 IN%	jonl@well.com	10-JUN-1993	MUSE - Sun Ra
4 IN%	kata@neowobblie.com	10-JUN-1993	overslept again...
5 IN%	chound@woody.com	10-JUN-1993	Great GIF image!

Figure 1: a typical e-mail box

interactive role-playing games), and other information and recreational resources. Now that you have your copy of "High-Weirdness by e-mail," you've got some places to telnet to!

E-Mail: Where you @?

Most of your communications on the net will take place through the Internet e-mail system. When you were assigned an account, you also gained an e-mail address which usually consists of your logon name followed by an "@" and the Internet site name of the computer you are attached to. When others know your address, they can send you mail from just about anywhere in the world with an Internet connection. E-mail, of course, flows both ways, and you can send mail just about anywhere as well, even to friends who may only have accounts on local bulletin boards.

How do you read mail, you ask? Or, for that matter, how do you know if you have mail in your box? Most systems, from the lowliest BBS to the most exotic supercomputer, let you know if you have mail right after you log in. If you have mail waiting, you usually get a message like "you have new mail." To read the mail, first enter the mail program by typing "mail" at the command prompt. You will then get a list of all

to your account.

To reply to a message that you have just read, simply press "r" at the mail prompt and follow the directions. To forward the message to someone else, just press "f." Mail programs usually have a good help feature: just press "h."

To send mail to someone, you don't even have to enter the mail program. Just type "mail user@host.name" at the command prompt, fill in the subject, and start bangin' out your deathless prose. When you're done, type a "." on a line by itself and the message will be off on its merry way!

USENET and Netnews:

Flame On!

If you like hot topics and even hotter discussions, if you have a question and you can't find someone in your life to answer it, or if you just want to tell as many people as you can about some new hack you came up with, USENET is the place to go. While e-mail is good for person-to-person communications, it can get kind of hairy when you start sending and receiving mail from large groups of people.

USENET provides a system of "news groups" that are much like the topical discussion areas on your local BBS. The only difference is that if you

groups when you enter the newsreader. (For more info on how to do this, see Ed Kroll's *The Whole Internet User's Guide*, O'Reilly and Assoc., Inc)

Once you have decided which newsgroups you want to read, reading is easy. Just enter a newsgroup by typing "y" when asked and you will be given a list of all the messages on the group. Naturally, the first time that you enter a newsgroup, you'll have a lot to catch up on, but you can look at each individual post by typing its number and reading through it in the same way that you read your mail. If you want to look at the list of topics again, just type "=". When you have decided that you've looked at enough, just type "c" to "catch-up" on the group and all the messages will be marked as read. When you enter this group again, you will only see new messages.

Data surfing, net gabbing, and other resources to dig...

Once you have mastered the basics — telnetting, FTP'ing, mailing, and reading news — you'll begin to get a glimmer of just how huge a place this is. It's very easy to get lost, or worse yet, become overwhelmed and decide to just hang out in your little corner of it, sending mail and reading news. The problem soon becomes one of too many places to go and too many things to do as desperation replaces boredom. Is there a map? No, but there are resources to help you find your way.

Archie that File, You Jughead!

You've heard of some hot new warez and you're dying to get your grubby little datamits on it. Where do you go? You visit Archie! Archie is a program dedicated to tracking down files in anonymous FTP sites across the Internet. Every so often, Archie sends out a feeler to the various anonymous FTP sites and asks for what new files it has and where they are located. Archie then takes that info and carefully files it away and waits for you to call and ask him where it is. To visit Archie,

you need to telnet to "archie.sura.net" and login as "qarchie" to make use of the quick file search. Then, to find a file you want, just type "prog" and the filename. In a few seconds, Archie will spit back to you all the files that match that description and where they are. With the info in your virtual hand, "quit" out of Archie and ftp the goods.

Gopher

If you are looking for information on a specific topic and you just can't seem to find a file through Archie, try Gopher. Gophers are easy to use, menu-driven info-sources that exist to, um, go-fer the information that you're looking for. They also serve as connections to other gophers, so if you log on to one and it doesn't have the info you want, you can usually connect to one that does. To get started, try the excellent, comprehensive system set up by the University of Maryland. Just telnet to "info.umd.edu" and login as "new-menu." From there, it's a simple method of using arrow keys to find the information you want. You can read it on-line or even have it mailed to you through e-mail to read later!

IRC: CB Radio for Net Geeks

If you're feeling lonely and you want to hang out and talk to people in real time, the IRC is the way to go. IRC, or the Internet Relay Chat, is a program that lets you hook up to a kind of virtual meeting hall containing various rooms on different topics. If you log on to the IRC (type *irc* at the prompt or telnet to *bradenville.andrew.cmu.edu*) you can chat on different "channels" about cyberpunk topics (the Cyberpunk# channel), mind-altering chemicals (drugs# channel) or just about any topic you can think of. At any time, day or night, someone around the world is probably just hanging out, waiting for you to jack in.

Into the Future...

The Internet is young and growing every day. With the basics you have here, you should be well on your way to surfing its vastness. With the digitalization of our culture, the increased emphasis on communications, and the

comp	Computers
news	Groups about USENET
sci	Scientific topics
talk	Debate forums
misc	Miscellaneous groups
else	other
soc	Social issues
rec	Recreational like hobbies, music, and cooking

Figure 2: A few types of newsgroups

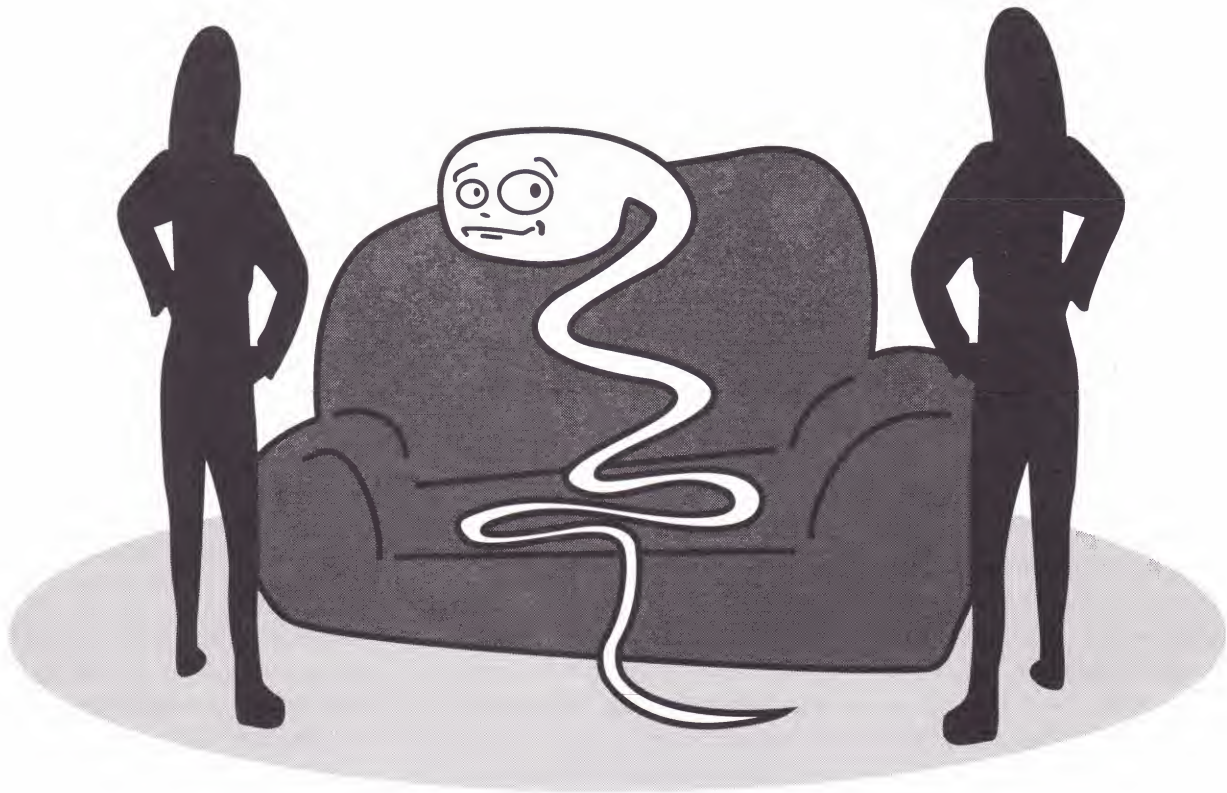
rapidly growing sphere of networks that are accessible from the Internet, more and more data becomes available to those that know how and where to get it. So, fire up the ol' modem and get to it! See you in Cyberspace! ✕

Sean Carton:

scarto1@umbc8.umbc.edu



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The Virgin Couch

by Patti Parisi

Illustration by Ben Benjamin



■ *Jim sat naked on the white couch while Kris and I stared. "Whaddya think, K? He's pretty sexy, a strong, muscular body and all," I said, pointing to his rising dick.*

"Hmmm," she replied. Kris had met Jim before, but those times he had been at least partially clothed. They had become friends or acquaintances, really, through me. Trying to appear serious, Kris stroked her chin as she contemplated her next move or her next comment. "Yeah, he's all right," she continued, as Jim, a handsome, six-foot-tall, muscular 31-year-old with piercing green-eyes, short, spiky blond hair, and a deeply dimpled chin, proudly preened and stroked himself, like a chimp.

"What exactly are we doing, anyway?" Kris asked.

"A threesome, right? Isn't that what we're here for?" said Jim.

A minute earlier, Kris had her hand between my boyfriend's legs, and he had been caressing her breasts — all the while her husband slept upstairs.

"This is too much!" I laughed. It was two o'clock Valentine's Day morning. The week had taken its toll on me as I lay restless every night, depressed that I agreed to let my friends fuck each other. I couldn't control my slaphappiness nor my desire to get the hell out of there and get some sleep.

"What?" Jim said defensively, his eyes darting between Kris's and mine. "Hey, ya know this isn't supposed to be a comedy."

"We warned you, didn't we?" asked my best friend and soulmate of ten years. "We told you there'd be no way you could keep us from laughing. Hell, ya get the two of us together and all we do is act goofy. And to see you so, uh, exposed, it's just

really amusing," Kris teased.

I wondered how much longer until my eyes slammed shut from exhaustion and how we had let this absurdity go so far anyway.

I met Kris eleven years ago when I was a freshman in college at Colorado State University. I knew from the day I met her in a fitness class that we'd be friends for life. Having had a strangling Lutheran upbringing, I was constantly shocked and amused by Kris's antics. She was cool. She never wore a bra except to exercise, she let her armpit hair grow wildly, she received straight As in dance therapy with what seemed to be little effort, and she seductively teased every man who dared to cross her path. We went running almost daily up to Horsetooth Reservoir, seven-miles roundtrip; and except during the winter, we'd strip off our clothes and leap into the cold water. Every Friday afternoon, we'd bag the running and eat nachos, cookies and ice cream and slam dance in the garage to the B-52s, the Sex Pistols, Black Flag, and particularly Joe Jackson's "Beat Crazy."

Our collective energy never seemed to run out, and it only intensified when Kris' husband, Mark, came home from work. He would drive back to Fort Collins after working in Denver as a marketing rep for an insurance company. He hated his job and he hated the "technocrats" and "bureaucrats" who he slaved for. He'd slam the front door, rip off his tie, put on his holey blue jeans, inhale a couple pounds of spaghetti, then take out his electric guitar and jam the night away. We'd tackle and tickle him and tell him that his guitar screeching sucked, as did his pornographic lyrics about Cub Scouts and Brownies.

"Do you mind if Trish and I have sex?" Mark would half-seriously inquire many times of his wife, my best friend.

"Go ahead. I'll just leave you two alone!" Kris would say.

"Ha, ha. Time for me to go home! See ya manana!" I would always respond. And so our happy life went in the small, semi-conservative northwest Colorado town. Then they moved away for four years to Townsville, in the tropics of Australia. Unable to bear their absence, after two years I arrived at their doorstep. We were inseparable: We scuba dived in the Great

Barrier Reef, hung out with the yabos at every pub, mingled with the artists and deadbeats at coffee shops, windsurfed near Maggie Island, and ran naked through the rainforest with Cockatoos singing their approval. And every night, I'd lie on my sleeping bag at the foot of their bed like a pet dog, and I'd stare at the gekko-covered ceil-

*A minute
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boyfriend's legs,
and he had been
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breasts — all the
while her husband
slept upstairs.*

ing, waiting for one to drop on my face. But, with the security of their suction cup hands and feet, the gekkos never lost their grip.

"Your biology lesson starts here and first of all we should make it clear that the species known as males have these little white things with little white tails which multiply and start to shout: 'It's getting crowded down here, let us out!' Once relieved, they start again. It's not a process controlled by the brain. It's nothing to do with their hearts, nothing to do with their homes, nothing to do with their beds. It's just b-i-o-l-o-g-y, biology; can't you see? It's just biology coming in between you and me."

I had memorized the lyrics to Joe Jackson's popular song, "Biology," from his "Beat Crazy" album. As an undergraduate student in physical anthropology, I found the meanings and implications of these words fascinating, contradictory,

and frustrating. In the song, Joe attempts to justify his promiscuity. His girlfriend is not the least bit impressed, and she feels that the "biology" excuse applies to her as well. She tells Joe that she "feels no shame about Dave and Tony and Bill and James." Joe is flabbergasted — she can't do that! Ah, but she can.

"I want to do it three or four times a day," Mark has said about his sex cravings. "If I don't, I get deadly sperm buildup, also known as 'dsb.'"

Kris, however, like many women, I suppose, could survive weeks without sex and not suffer any physiological side effects. "It's really not a priority of mine. It gets boring; well, unless it was with someone new and exciting! Unfortunately society has a problem with that."

"Why do we talk about sex so much?" I asked.

"Because it's fun and interesting. It drives us," Kris said.

"Because it tears people apart. People can't deal with it; we need to talk about it, accept it, DO it without guilt," lectured Mark, a man with many affairs under his belt. "Women are too cautious. It makes sense since they have to carry the weight. Men can just mosey on their way. Women have trouble getting comfortable with the idea that sex is not bad. Those who don't have a problem with it are considered nymphomaniacs, but they're actually just normal. If a man likes to screw, he's healthy. It's a double standard, ya know, 'boys will be boys, but ooohh, she's a slut.' It takes women a long time to get out from under the blanket of socialization. Some never do. It's a real crime."

Kris and I wanted to commit no crime, so we shed that blanket.

I met Jim, a civil engineer and part-time sculptor, a couple of years ago. We were just friends and we liked to "hang out" together. Hanging out consisted of rollerblading, seeing movies, museum-hopping, drinking beer, and hot-tubbing. We had lots of fun, especially when he became preoccupied with sex.

"I'm attracted to you," he said.



"Oh!" I said. "Ditto."

"I want to make love with you," he said. I hated it when people said "make love" when they weren't in love.

"Okay." I was open to something new and adventurous! What the hell! Besides, I even liked him — a lot. And so it went for about a year and a half. Along the way, Jim revealed his secret fantasies, no longer using the verb phrase "make love":

"I wanna do it on a deserted island. I wanna do it on top of a mountain. I wanna do it in a park. I wanna do it in a museum. I wanna do it at work."

"At work? Doesn't that Playmate software you have stimulate you enough at work?" I asked. In a gesture of male bonding, a friend of Jim's had installed a two-dimensional love slave on his computer. Touch a button and she rips off her clothes. Touch another and she squeals. Touch another button and she talks dirty to you while she rubs herself. And my favorite, the combo: she rubs her swollen tits while she sticks a dildo up her vagina. The options are endless.

Then my fling met my best friends. Oddly, Jim's fantasies changed as well.

"I wanna do it with two women," he said.

"Do you? Huh. Do you have anyone in mind?" I asked, suddenly aware that I had fallen in love with a guy who wasn't content with the fantastic sex I provided him on a record-breaking daily basis.

"Well, it would have to be one of your friends, of course."

"Of course. Well, I don't know anyone, including me, who would be into it."

"Really? It would be so much fun, don't ya think?"

"For you maybe, but I don't think 'we' would get much satisfaction from it," I said.

"Oh yeah you would. I would know what to do. I would drive you both crazy, you'd have a great time and you'd come back for more."

"That's hysterical. Just exactly what would you do to keep two women occupied and satisfied?"

He explained how he would work his wonders: one of us would squat over his face and receive a licking while the other squirmed upon his dick.

"Ha! That'd take about twenty seconds. Then what?" I asked.

You'd take turns giving me blow jobs.

Then we'd rest and do it again," he answered.

"Well, I'll think about it and see if I can muster anyone up," I replied, knowing that the thought would escape my mind forever.

"How about Kris?" Jim asked. "She's sexy and attractive."

"Does that matter?"

"Well, yeah, obviously," he said.

"Okay, I'll ask her and get back to ya about it," I assured him.

A few months later, Kris and Mark and I were drinking cappuccinos at a French-style cafe and talking about the usual fare, oblivious to the innocent bystanders at other tables.

"I've decided that I need to have an affair," Kris blurted out. Mark dumped out the plastic dispenser and sorted the Nutrasweet and the raw sugar packets into separate piles. "Mark agrees. I'm just not happy."

"Whatever makes you happy," Mark affirmed.

"Do you want to have an affair, too, Mark?" I asked.

"Oh, it doesn't matter, I'm too busy at work to worry about it. Besides I don't know anyone to have an affair with," he said.

"Me," I offered. "Well, K, who do you want to have an affair with?"

"I don't know! I never meet anybody. Do you have any friends who you can set me up with?"

"Jim. You can have an affair with Jim," I replied generously.

"Oh no! He's yours, Trish! I could never do that."

"He wants to DO it with you, anyway. So just go ahead, I don't care. Whatever makes you happy." I lied. I did care. I didn't want her to fuck my boyfriend, but it seemed obvious they wanted each other. Why be selfish, I wondered, after all, I frequently felt the desire to jump another man's bones.

"Well..." she said. We all laughed hysterically.

"Okay, it's settled, I'll call him tonight and tell him that his fantasy may come true! What the hell? Then we'll do a threesome — or a foursome! Whaddya think of that, Mark?" I asked.

"I think for a guy to want to have sex with two women is selfish and excessively

indulgent, that's all it is. It's a feeling of power and dominance that 'hey, I can satisfy two women at once, I'm such a stud!'" he replied, apparently disgusted with the notion.

"Would you want to screw two women at once?" Kris inquired. How many ears were tuned to our table?

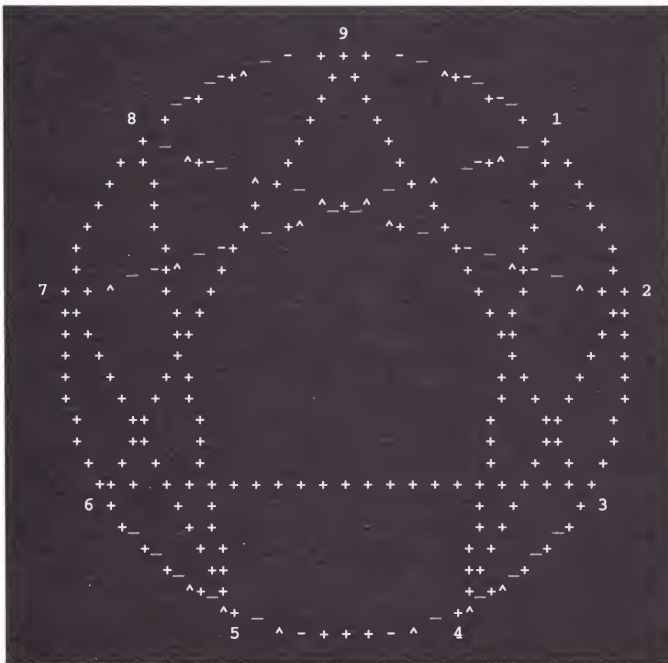
"Yeah, I think about it, but that's as far as it goes — a fantasy. Hell, one's enough; I'd rather have quality sex with one than mediocre, self-conscious sex with two. The fantasy would be ruined if it came true anyway."

We had stopped laughing and an uneasiness had fallen across the livingroom. Jim still sat naked on the couch, but in an embarrassed position with his legs crossed and his arms folded across his goose-pimpled chest. I could hardly keep my eyes open, but I scanned the walls for distractions: Australian aborigine paintings of children, carvings of snakes and roos and platypuses, boomerangs, and palm leaf weavings from the Festival of Pacific Arts. I turned back and caught Kris's brown eyes. She had just sprung off the couch and landed in the wicker chair across the room. She winked and said, "Well, g'night, I'm goin' to bed." And she disappeared up the stairs to cuddle with her sleeping, oblivious husband.

"Good thinking," I said. "Let's get going. I'm pooped."

Jim picked up his jeans and reluctantly peeled them on. He didn't get what he came for. After a night of erotic dancing atop benches in the city park and a sensuous massage involving three on the couch, Jim said, "Well, I'll be the first to rip off my clothes." And in less than a blink of an eye, he had — bringing Kris and I from our drunken stupor to a realization of what we had gotten ourselves into. He couldn't understand why we hadn't pounced on him and begged for orgasmic mercy. But it was so simple: we weren't quite the swingers we aspired to be. And, like Mark said, what good are fantasies if they come true?

Still, though, I wanna DO it in a pickup truck in the mountains on a stormy night with a hot-tub nearby and wolves howling in the distance while the two handsome, studly men and I share a bottle of Chimay Ale and "Biology" plays on the radio... ✕



Enneagram

The Nine Archetypes of Anal Behaviorism (colloq.: Assholes)

by Ward Parkway

I Anal Retentive Know-it-all

Annoying critic; always gotta be right; "don't do that/ put that down;" no sense of humor; cob up their ass; up on their hind legs 'a preachin'; self-appointed moral guardian here to save the world; talking-head pundit.

Exemplars: Pat Robertson, Andrea Dworkin, George Will

2 Professional Doormat

Martyr, corporate suckup deluxe; recovery program addict; back-stabber; cowering manipulator; pathos personified.

Exemplars: Jesus, Ed McMahon, Nancy Reagan

3 Look-at-me Showoff

Goddamned clown; blowhard; center of the universe.

Exemplars: Andrew Dice Clay, Rush Limbaugh, Howard Stern

4 Tortured Artist

Whiner; manic-depressive nutcase; livin' in a dream world.

Exemplars: Sinead O'Connor, Morrissey, Crispin Glover

5 Apathetic Bastard

Detached; greed-head; voyeuristic; don't get involved; stoic; "I want to be alone;" passive-aggressive loner.

Exemplars: Thomas Pynchon, Ted Koppel, Bill Cosby

6 Paranoid Conspiracy Theorist

"The eschaton's coming!" "the police are coming!" apocalyptic milleniarist; schizophrenic.

Exemplars: Oliver Stone, David Koresh, Jello Biafra

7 Perpetually Adolescent Fakir

Superficial poseur; will never grow up; gadfly who gathers everyone else's ideas, packages them and then acts like it's their own; avoids actually doing what they talk about.

Exemplars: Carlos Castaneda, Milli Vanilli

8 Mr. Fucking Bossman

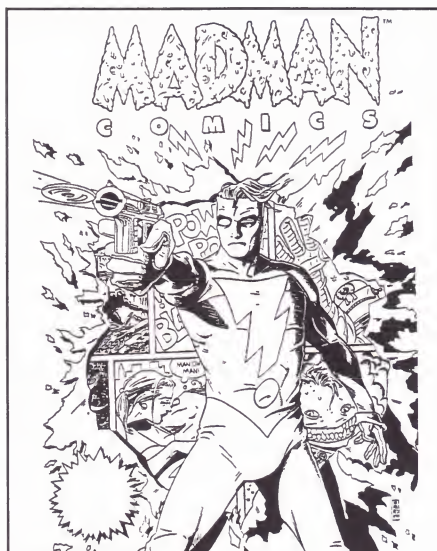
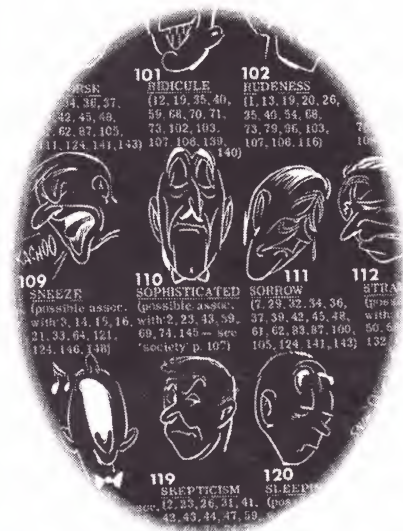
"I'm in charge," their way or the highway; power-grabbing demagogue; competitive "winning is everything" jerk.

Exemplars: Alexander Haig, H. Ross Perot, Bill Gates

9 All-purpose Asshole

Anything not listed above; All of the above; annoying in every way; annoying in different ways at different times.

Exemplars: Ted Turner, Pope John Paul, Ron Popeil



Madman

by Michael Allred

■ Madman used to be a guy named Frank. Then he died in a car wreck. He was reanimated by a crazy doctor, but his mind is a blank slate. In his search to collect clues about his previous life, Madman encounters robots, aliens, and monsters. The main story, "Crash Course for Ravers," stars creatures from outer space who crash land their hopped-up saucer into the outskirts of Snap City as local street beatniks are alerted by an unknown element found in the city's sewers. The art is like a parody of the bad pre-*Fantastic Four* Marvel monster comics, and the dialog is intentionally stilted, giving *Madman* a gold star in my book. [Shnorrig Bardizbanian]

Madman: \$2.95. Dark Horse Comics: (503) 652-8815

Freak's Amour

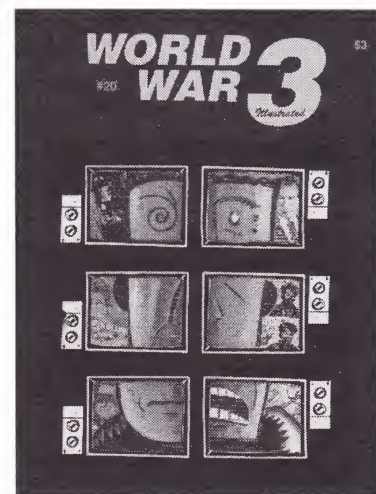
by Mark Burbey, Phil Hester and Ande Parks

■ A nuclear bomb goes off in a tenement in Jersey City killing 1200 people and scrambling the chromosomes of 77,000 others. The freaks become the ultimate visible minority and can only survive by taking menial and degrading jobs such as whores or players in rape shows - the freaks' amour. Then one of them discovers that his mutated goldfish produces eggs that are temporarily fatal, clinical death occurs but the effect wears off after a few hours. Subsequently, he becomes the big

dealer of a new kind of trip - experience life after death and still be able to do everything else you had planned. From here we're dragged through the story of a pair of freak brothers, kind of a cyberpunk East of Eden.

Several important themes are explored, including racism, sexism, self-loathing, conspiracy theorists and drug use. It's a very ambitious project and I can't help but think that the main reason it works is that it was adapted from Tom DeHaven's novel of the same name - the characters are fully developed and believable. Mark Burbey has done a wonderful job of adapting it to comics and Phil Hester and Ande Parks' art completely conveys the darkness and desperation. It's a strong start to Dark Horse's Modern Classics series. Can't wait to see what they do next. [John F. Butland]

Freak's Amour: \$3.95. Dark Horse Comics: (503) 652-8815



World War 3

Edited by Peter Kuper, Scott Cunningham and Kevin Pyle

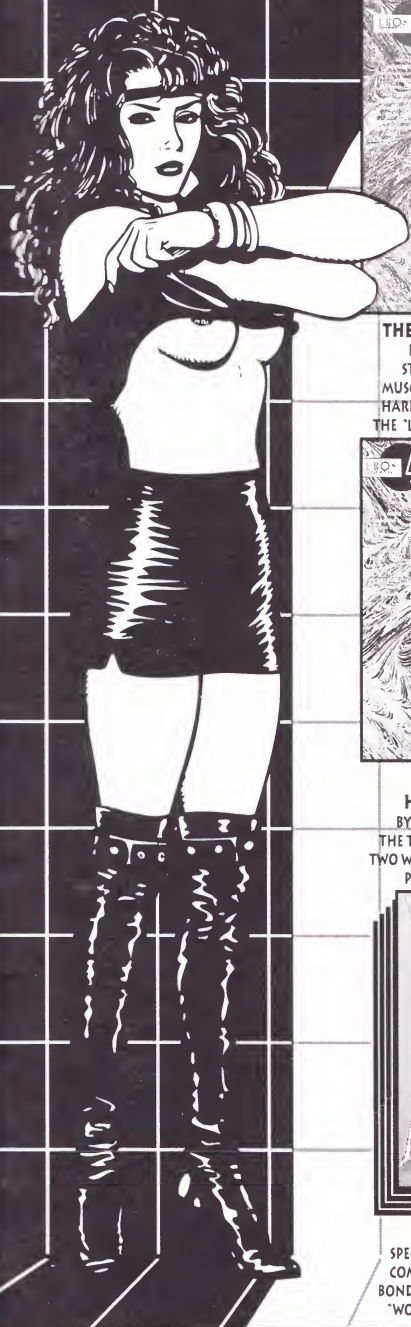
■ WW3 has been running comics about mean people waging non-traditional war on nice people for 14 years. Their 20th issue, titled "Tell-a-Vision," is all about the meanies' favorite weapon against the little people: commercial media. Some of the stories are of the "shame on you for being alive" variety, but the stuff by Kuper and Eric Drooker is great [Mark]

World War 3: \$4, Box 20271, Tompkins Square Station, New York NY 10009 X

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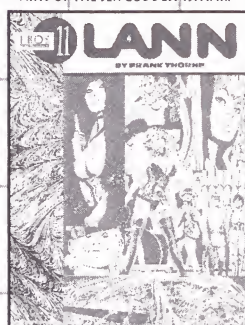
THE YOUNG WITCHES
BY F. SOLANO LOPEZ & BARREIRO
INTENSE GOTHIC TALE OF A
"SPECIAL" SCHOOL IN WHICH GIRLS
ARE EDUCATED IN THE SENSUAL
ARTS OF THE SEX GODDESS ISHTAR.



LIZ AND BETH VOL. 1
BY G. LEVIS
A BLONDE AND A BRUNETTE... PARIS
IN THE SPRINGTIME... LOTS OF SEX, A
FEW SPANKINGS, AND SOME
SURPRISES... NEED WE SAY MORE?



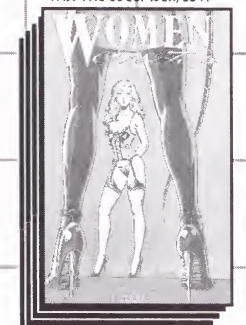
**2 HOT GIRLS ON A
HOT SUMMER NIGHT**
BY HOOPER AND WETHERELL
THE TIME-HOPPING ESCAPEADES OF
TWO WELL-ENDOWED BRITISH LASSES.
PASS THE CUCUMBER, LUV!



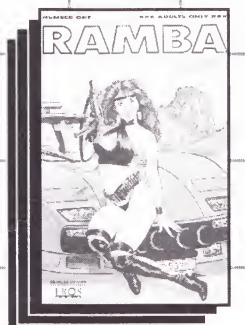
THE COLLECTED LANN
BY FRANK THORNE
HEAVY METAL'S SEXY SUPERSLUT OF THE
GALACTIC SPACEWAYS LIVES AGAIN IN
THIS NOVEL-LENGTH COMPILATION.
SUPERB ARTWORK!



THE BLONDE: "DOUBLE CROSS"
BY F. SAUDELLI
ITALY'S SEXIEST SUPERSPY LEAVES A
WAKE OF TRUSSED-UP BUXOM
BOMBSHELLS IN THIS NOVEL-LENGTH
BONDAGE CLASSIC. MAMA MIA!



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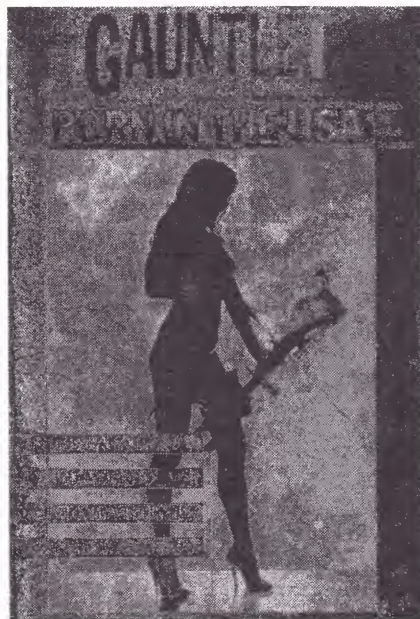
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ZINES

	Zine Rating System
×	Thrown into the trunk of a car by a stranger with a gun.
●	A live insect in your sandwich.
●●	A good episode of <i>Dragnet</i> .
●●●	A five-dollar bill on the sidewalk.
●●●●	Atlantis resurfaces from ocean; you're declared king/queen.



GAUNTLET: Exploring the Limits of Free Expression

Content ●●●●

Production ●●●

■ *Gauntlet* deals with only one subject per issue. Due to the considerable length of the zine, it deals with it quite extensively. Issue #5, the "Porn in the USA" edition, brought the issue of freedom of expression and censorship in the sex industry (whether it be dance, film, written word or visual art) to the forefront of my thoughts for quite a while after reading it.

The many contributing writers have very clear-cut notions about how things should be vs. how they are. *Gauntlet* claims to show both sides of the issue, but I found it pretty one-sided. However, because it was all so well written, it didn't bother me.

I think it's an unfortunate statement about the times that the people who defend freedom of expression, for porn in particular, are so embittered that their rampant sarcasm and rage seeps through most of the articles and interviews (see features about Madonna and Spike Lee in particular). Though it gives the writing an edge, and I wholeheartedly agree with

the opinions of the authors, it makes me a little sad that the most pleasurable physical expression in the world is such a source of bitterness in the battle over its representation. [Julie Fishman]

\$9.95 plus \$2 p&h. Dept. A93, 309 Powell Rd, Springfield, PA 10964

Wrapped in Plastic

Content ●●●

Production ●●●

■ A "wrapped-in-full-color" zine for *Twin Peaks*/David Lynch fans. Although most of the material is devoted to the *Twin Peaks* series and its numerous by-products, there is also coverage on all Lynch's projects and other weird, wild, and wonderful aberrations in TV and film (*Tetsuo*, *Wild Palms*, *The Prisoner*, *The X-Files*). Includes a large letters column and lots of ads for TP collectibles. [Gareth]

\$3.95. \$25/6 issues. Win-Mill Productions, 1912 E. Timberview Lane, Arlington, TX 76014

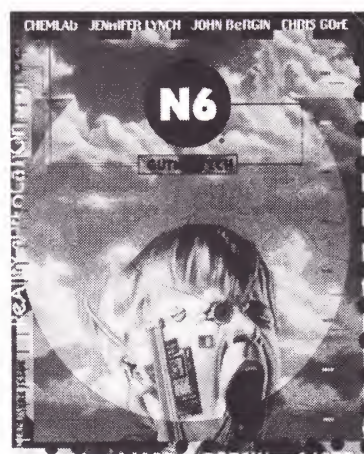
N6

Content ●●●

Production ●●●

This is, by far, the strongest debut of a zine I've seen in some time. The writing is top-notch for a "newbie." Actually *N6* started off life as a 4-6 page xeroxed newsletter, which I never saw. The current incarnation as a high-quality zine sports a full-color cover and a nice mix of material related to all things... ah... you know... the "c-word" and the "i-word." I have to say, when I first saw *N6*, I wondered if we really needed another rag devoted to this very overpopulated territory, but it quickly won me over. I look forward to issue #2 (interviews with James O'Barr, film maker Jonathan Reiss, and Front 242). Issue #1 has interviews with Jennifer Lynch (on *Boxing Helena*), Chemlab, Chris Gore, and John Bergin, plus music, tech, video, software, book, and zine reviews. Check it out! [Gareth]

\$2. PO Box 1394, Hollywood, CA 90078, e-mail: n6@cyberden.sf.ca.us



TIFF: People. Places. Machines

Content ●●●

Production ●●

■ *TIFF* is basically a review catalog. What makes its reviews unique is the randomness with which the items seem to be selected. Their fascination with "intelligence" (that's spying to you and me) merchandise and processes leads me to wonder whether they're storing up information for an inevitable run from the law. Either way, there was a helpful and informative review of *2600 - The Hacker Quarterly* and a much-appreciated glossary to help us phone hacking novices to follow along.

The most unfortunate problem with an otherwise alright pack of reviews is the combination of the poor photocopy quality, the text overlapping itself, the text overlapping the graphics, and the continuous change in size and color gradation. It's an overall pain in the ass to read. [Julie Fishman]

PO Box 97011-149, Roncesvalles Ave
Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M6R3B3
fax: (416) 761-9108

2600: The Hacker Quarterly

Content ●●●●

Production ●●●

■ On June 9, 1993, let's hope that at least a few kids became bored enough with their Sega units to go channel surfing and catch Congressman Markey on *C-Span* holding up a copy of *2600* and calling it a "manual for computer crime." What youngster wouldn't prick up their ears at that recommendation?

I only understand about a fourth of what goes on in a typical issue of *2600*, but I like what I understand, and the rest of it is just great to look at, because I know I'm looking at what are essentially magic spells — understandable only by real hackers — that can control the flow of information. It's forbidden knowledge, but if you are willing to learn, you can use it to do powerful stuff.

Luckily for me, there was an easy-to-understand article in the latest issue (Volume 10 #3) called "How To Hack Honesty." It's about the multiple choice tests used by employers to pre-screen potential employees. The author, U.R. Source, explains the underlying principles behind honesty tests: the test makers believe that the ideal employee is one

who claims to have never broken the law, hates to take risks, and wants to severely punish people who break any law, no matter how minor the infraction. Pretty grim. And pretty easy to "beat" such tests, as explained by the author.

2600 is always worth reading even if you don't care that "a V.23 1200 bps modem receiver may be used

to modulate the Bell 202 signal." [Mark]

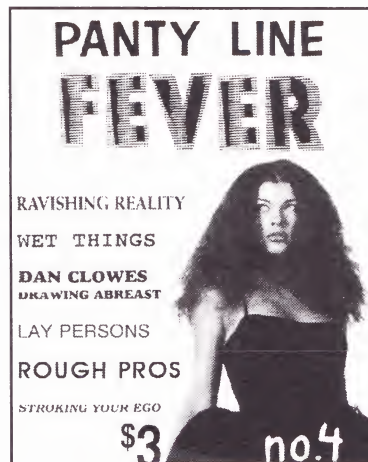
\$21/4 issues, PO Box 752, Middle Island
NY 11953

Derelict Speedball

Content ●●●

Production ●●●

■ The first thing I came across when flipping through this fine zine was a sincere-sounding prank letter to Sunshine Biscuits. An avid Cheez-It fan (*DS* editor Dick Pontoon) boasts that he eats a one-pound box of his favorite snack a week, compares Cheez-Its to Nabisco's inferior Cheese Nips, offers to send some original recipes for the back of the Cheez-Its box, and enthusiastically asks a bunch of other goofy questions for Sunshine to answer. Of course he gets a response, outlining the history of Sunshine and a page of recipes for tasty treats such as "Cheez-It Deviled Eggs" and "Cheez-It Ham Pie" (and no, they weren't interested in any of Pontoon's original recipes).



Although I was already a fan after laughing through these letters, *DS* continued to entertain me with comix, fugami, a meaty conversation with avant-garde filmmaker Saul Levine, a pro-Madonna rant (and I mean pro. If you don't like the woman, stay away from these guys, unless fierce namecalling pleases you), and lots of other fun tidbits. I'm addicted now. I want more *Speedball*! [Carla]

\$2/\$7 for 4 issues, 28 Hillside Street
#666, Boston MA 02120

Panty Line Fever

■ More variations in sexuality brought to you from your friends at *Factsheet Five*. This one has some very stimulating photos of pretty naked girls along with some not so pretty photos of dead folks. Angry commentary too. A revealing interview with Dan "Eight Ball" Clowes, A visit to an S&M parlor, commentary from behind the (sex shop) counter, jacking off, and *PepGrlz* comics. [Seth Friedman]

Sample \$3, \$ 9.00/3 issues. Rick Hall, 234 E
7th ST #1FE, New York, NY 10009

Blue Blood

■ A polymorphously perverse zine that caters to vampires and other blood drinkers, masters and slaves, goth guys and gals, and everyone else who is kinked but good.

Categorizing this zine is a tough call, but

sex of all forms is the (un)common thread. Every page is a feast of hot and scary words and pictures. If you get shivers down your spine when aroused, then this is your zine. The personal ads are worth the price of admission, either for entertainment purposes or finding that rare and special someone. "Wanted: OB/GYN Examination table, complete with stirrups and speculum — if not available,

I'll just take the WF who wants to play related sex games with this DWM, 42: doctor (me) - patient or nurse (you)."

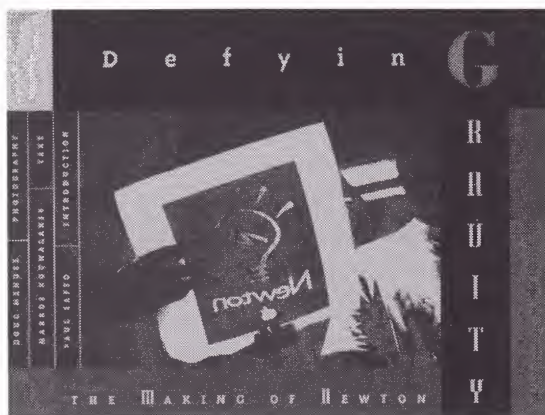
[Jerod Pore]

\$22/3 issues. 14207 Chesterfield Road,
Rockville, MD 20853 X





BOOKS



Defying Gravity: The Making of Newton

by Doug Menuez and Markos Kounalakis

■ This book looks great: It's wider than it is tall, and full of pictures of the people who burned their brains out to get Apple's PDA to market before everybody else. Apple gave photojournalist Doug Menuez unlimited access to the engineers, programmers and marketing-types who developed the Newton MessagePad, and he did a nice job documenting their emotional pogo-stick-ride.

The text, however, drags along the ground like a deflated helium balloon. I was so impressed by the look and feel of *Defying Gravity* that I was tricked into expecting another *Hackers* or *Soul of a New Machine*. I wanted to learn about the people on Newton's team, and I wanted a good layperson's explanation of the technology; instead, I got a surface account of the deal-making, exhaustion, and infighting behind the making of Newton. Like the current version of Newton MessagePad, *Defying Gravity* is a sexy artifact, but doesn't deliver on its promise. [Mark]

Defying Gravity: The Making of Newton, by Doug Menuez and Markos Kounalakis. Beyond Words Publishing. \$29.95

It's A Conspiracy

by The National Insecurity Council

■ Remember Operation Eagle Claw? That was the mission to rescue the 53 Americans held hostage in the U.S. Embassy in Teheran that ended in abysmal failure. It turns out that one of the marines in the Iranian desert that night was Ollie North. Coincidence? Maybe. For

some, though, it's proof of yet another conspiracy.

It's eerie coincidences like that that make this such a fun book. And we see the same faces and organizations popping up time after time in a myriad of (seemingly) unrelated events; Gerald Ford, J. Edgar Hoover, George Bush, the CIA, Du Pont, and GM. And, was there anything sleazy since 1950 that can't be tied to Richard Nixon? The NIC manage to pull off a pretty neat trick — it's not a frothing Oliver

Stone/Illuminati rant. Hey don't get me wrong, I like a good plot as much as the next guy. I just don't believe that everything is a plot. Some will object to the less than completely serious tone used throughout, but then isn't that just more proof of the cover-up involved to hide the real guilty parties? (I guess that makes me guilty too.)

All the familiar theories (JFK, Elvis) and a few more obscure ones (Sarkhan, Gulf of Tonkin) are here. And best of all: each theory is broken up into bathroom-length chapters. [John F. Butland]

It's A Conspiracy, by The National Insecurity Council. Earthworks Press. \$9.95

Scram: Relocating Under a New Identity

by James S. Martin, Attorney At Law

■ This is a short (83 page) trade paperback that Loompanics sells for \$12. It has lots of white space, which I suppose is helpful in making those last minute notes as you prepare to Scram.

Scram does have two characteristics that distinguish it from other Loompanics porn (please note that I do not use the word "porn" contemptuously one of my favorite stroke books is Loompanics' *How to Start Your Own Country*).

Firstly it has a high moral tone about not abandoning your children or doing anything unethical — James S. Martin, Attorney At Law, even suggests doing nothing illegal. (Yeah, right). The second and important difference is that this book is not a Loompanics fantasy volume — it is there for people seriously thinking about leaving and living (more or less legally) under a new name.

If you're planning to scam, don't discuss it with your friends. Buy this over-

priced book, and show it to no one. Martin explains that leaving means a total break, not just with your papers — but your car, your habits, your looks, your friends.

Lead a low-key productive life and you can get away with it. Probably. Martin also describes how searches are conducted, and who is liable to search for you. This book looks okay as a manual, bad as porn. Don't buy it for the fantasy of escaping, because it will burst some bubbles.

Best tip: work for a gas station in your new town; gas stations can provide cheap clunker cars you can drive for a while without registration or insurance. [Don Webb]

Scram, by James S. Martin: \$12 + \$4 p&h. Loompanics Unlimited, PO Box 1197, Port Townsend WA 98368.

Fuzzy Thinking: The New Science of Fuzzy Logic

by Bart Kosko, Ph.D.

"ABANDON SHIP GOD DAMN IT... EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF!" William S. Burroughs, *The Place of Dead Roads*

■ Attention passengers: It appears that the big mental boat we've been cruising in is going down. Look closely at the expanding leaks all over the hull. It's been like that for 2,300 years now—right from the day we shoved off from Athens on Aristotle's little Love Boat. This leakage results from flaws in the original design and construction of our craft, as well as the crew's penchant for stuffing in more and more compartments. Most of us haven't noticed any of this, as we've had our frontal lobes parked in recliners up on the Lido deck. One group of crew members, however, the scientists, along with their below-deck pals, the mathematicians, are now hell bent on organizing ever smaller and more complex bucket brigades in vain hopes of keeping the old gal afloat. The cartoonish absurdity of this approach is becoming more and more apparent to many of us as we sit up and

lower our Blublockers. How opportune, then, that in our hour of panic, along comes purser Bart Kosko with a big armful of life vests. The bottom line is that, eventually everyone is going to have to get wet.

Kosko succeeds in *Fuzzy Thinking*, not so much by splashing us with cold buckets of complex mathematical proofs and equations, but by drawing for us a warm bath of prose in which we can leisurely soak up the ideas behind fuzzy logic. These ideas cleverly unfold out of the dimensional world and life of this contemporary renaissance scientist. In and amongst concise textual and graphical descriptions of fuzzy logic and eye-opening anecdotes from history and the bureaucracy of science, float his ponderings on the interconnectedness of nature and perception. Throughout the book the

concept of fuzziness is tied to aspects of our world: how it's changing and why.

The book begins with a discussion of the difference between bivalency (A or Not-A, on/off, black/white, yes/no, good/bad, etc.) and multivalency or fuzziness (the spectrum between and degree of A or Not-A, on and off, black and white, yes and

no, good and bad, etc.). Kosko emcees a wrasslin' match between Aristotle and Buddha, one round of which takes place on a Rubik's Cube. Other highlights involve an overview of how fuzzy logic affects machine IQ, and how this intelligence is beginning to be applied by the Japanese. A wide range of current applications are described, from "better-than-we've-got-now" smart washing machines and self-steadying video cameras to "never-been-able-to-do-that-at-all" things like the stabilization of helicopters in flight when a rotor blade is lost.

Kosko's book delivers yet another view to the perceptual revolution occurring on our little ship of fools. It's ironic

that emergent sciences such as Fuzzy Logic, Chaos, and Complexity appear to be ushering in new ways of looking at the world, but are actually connected to very old notions predating much of Western thought. How these ancient ideas are reaching up from the depths of human history to inundate the here and now is a frothy, swirling story of cultural, institutional, and technological currents. Hey... look over there! Isn't that Buckminster Fuller windsurfing? [Ward Parkway]

Fuzzy Thinking: The New Science of Fuzzy Logic, by Bart Kosko, Ph.D. Hyperion

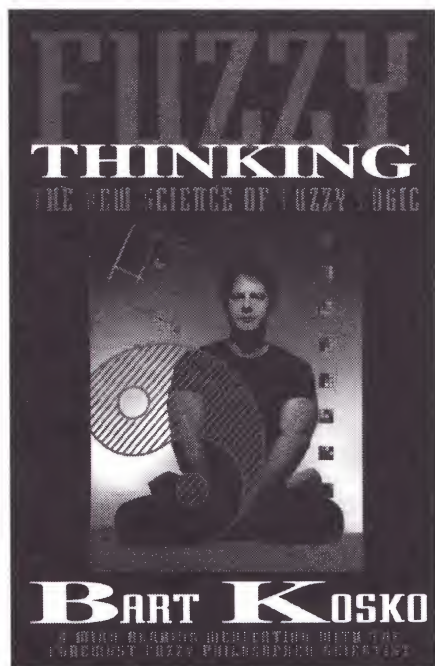
Methods of Disguise

by John Sample

■ In Italy, in the eighteen hundreds, there was a famous quick-change artist named Fregoli who would play as many as 60 different roles (men and women) during his solo performances. In what must have been a precursor to the modern-day monster rock tour, he traveled throughout Europe with a reported 370 trunks filled with 800 costumes, 1200 wigs, and 300 tons of props, sets, and make-up. He was possessed with the uncanny ability to completely change his looks, so much so, that his name has become synonymous with the art of physical deception and rapid transformation.

Now you can practice the art of Fregoli in the comfort of your own Airstream trailer with *Methods of Disguise*, a new workbook from the always helpful folks at Loompanics. You'll learn: How to morph your face with make-up, prosthetic appliances, and surgery. How to change behaviors and mannerisms. How to disappear into a crowd. There's even sections on cross dressing, sex change operations and fore-skin restoration! It's everything you need for all your identity hacking needs. My favorite parts: the section on constructing "Jug Ears" (a must for royal impersonators) and the starburst on the back cover which shouts: "As Seen on America's Most Wanted." Now THAT'S an endorsement. [Gareth]

Methods of Disguise (Second Edition)
by John Sample: \$14.95 + \$4 p&h.
Loompanics Unlimited, PO Box 1197, Port Townsend WA 98368. ✕



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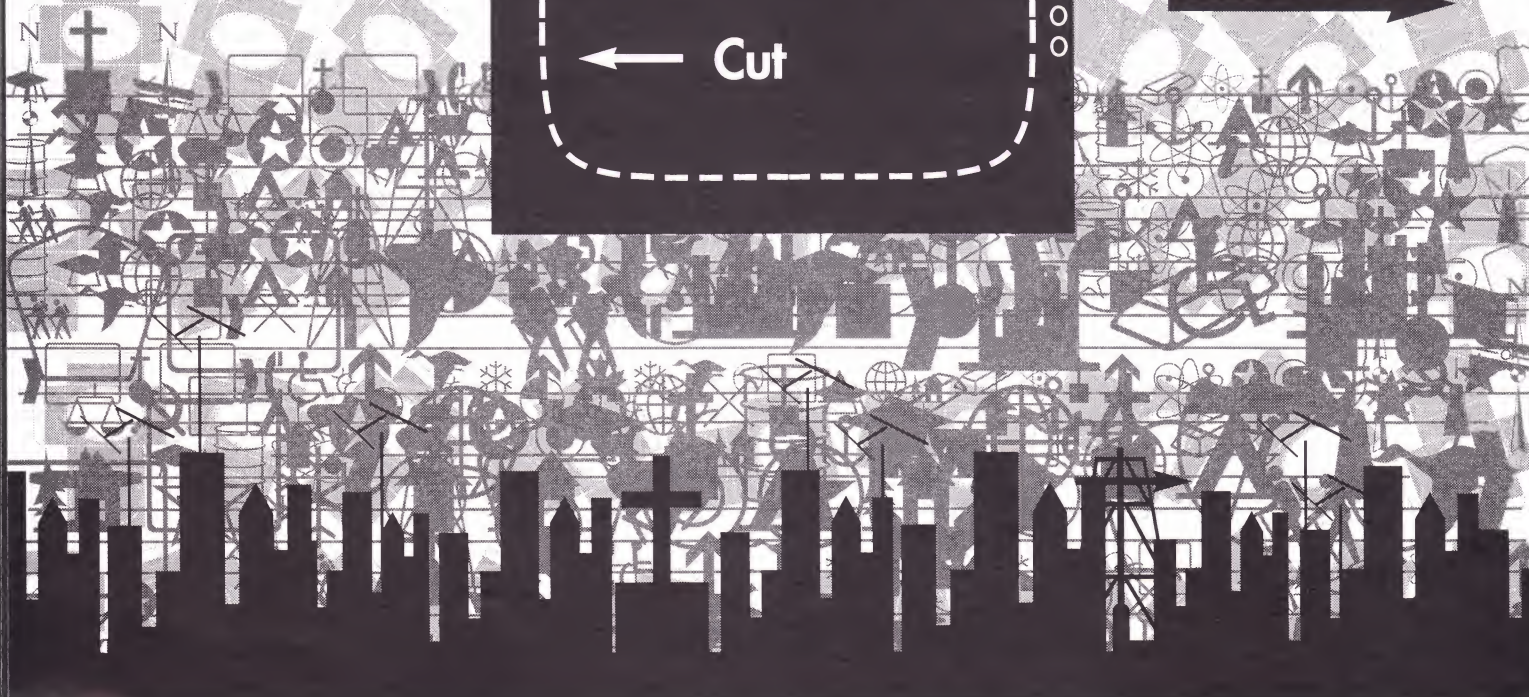
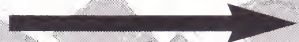
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The problem.



Action!



A new beginning.



I'm having a really great day



I love my work.



My life is exciting, especially on weekends and during my annual vacation.



Meditation.



Aha



!!!



Dinner's Ready.



This is really good.



There really is a god!

FARMER BOB'S GOOD LIFE

By Ward Parkway

■ AS THE RUSTY SCREEN DOOR SLAMMED shut behind him, Farmer Bob could see his breath drifting away in the silent pre-dawn air. Beneath his well-worn Carhart coveralls he remained quite toasty, thanks to Mrs. Bob's hearty breakfast of eggs, sausage, and a big pile o' buttermilk biscuits smothered with thick sausage gravy. That and a steamin' pot of coffee, black as your old hat, steeled him against the frigid February morning. With old and callused hands, he pulled his Ralston Feed cap down snug and headed out through the back yard to the barnyard gate to break ice on the water tanks. Winter always meant extra chores, but he took it all in stride. For Farmer Bob, there just wasn't a better life to be had.

The sky glowed a faint, dark magenta through the hedgerow to the east as he went quietly about his work. With a blunt and scarred axe, he quickly busted up the ice on the shallow ankle-high water tanks lined up against the feedlot fence. Then, picking up a small pitchfork, he tossed the frozen chunks onto the dirty concrete, where they crashed and skidded away in all directions. With that finished, he strode around the corner of the white wooden barn and lifted the metal latch on the side

door. The door opened onto a long hay-strewn hallway, on either side of which were the gates to knee-high pens constructed of metal tubing and closely-woven wire mesh. Above each pen hung an infrared lamp dangling waist-high from an electrical cord, altogether creating a segmented series of dim red glows down the length of the dusty and cobwebbed hallway. Going over the day's schedule in his head, Farmer Bob paused to stoop down, unlatch and pull open each gate behind him as he made his way down to the other end.

As if on cue, the daily procession began. From each pen emerged half a dozen or so Colorado River Toads, of varying sizes. Hesitantly at first, as if still half asleep, they hopped out into the dimly lit hallway, pausing before turning and following Farmer Bob down to the feed trough at the far end of the barn. With the last of the thirty pens opened, there formed a surging river of toads streaming down to take up their places in the little stanchions arrayed along the long galvanized metal feed trough. As they

were bellying up, Farmer Bob busied himself filling two five-gallon buckets with feed pellets from a small chute protruding out of a

storage bin. Walking along the backside of the trough, he poured out the contents of the first bucket, stopping when it was empty to retrieve the second bucket and finish filling the remaining length. He walked back to peer up the hallway, making sure there were no stragglers. Seeing that all the toads were now enthusiastically enjoying their morning repast, he reached up and threw the first switch on a grimy control panel mounted on the wall behind him. A creaking mechanical noise accompanied the slow, gentle closing of the little stanchions around each toad, holding them firmly and comfortably in their places as they continued their unabashed munching.

Farmer Bob then retrieved a dusty remote control that lay atop the switch panel and pointing it across the feeding area at a small, black Sony mini stack, fingered the small rubber buttons to mount and play one of the



five CDs he kept loaded in it. The dusty silence suddenly gave way to the haunting strains of "Lizard Point" from *Eno's Ambient #4 — On Land*. He didn't have the foggiest notion who this Eno feller was, as he'd found this particular CD layin' on the dashboard of his pickup after a visit from his nephew. The toads musta' known though, as they always responded well to it, producing copious amounts of fluid, now oozing out and visible, small, glistening pearls along their backs.

He set the remote back down and threw the second switch on the panel, starting a steady electrical hum as a line of miniature milking machines descended on black rubber tubes from the ceiling above the trough. When the little metal suction units reached chest height, they stopped abruptly and the floor beneath the trough began to rise on hydraulic cylinders, bringing the toads up to a level where they could be handled comfortably without Farmer Bob's having to bend down.

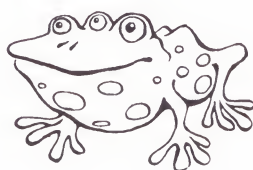
Starting at one end and working quickly, he moved down the line of toads, first inspecting, then carefully attaching a suction unit to the back of each one. The toads seemed unmoved by this daily ritual, as they went about their meal. When the last toad was hooked up, he stepped back to the control panel and threw yet another switch, turning on the pump apparatus, which each toad acknowledged by raising its head momentarily from the trough.

Later, after the toads were sucked dry, he'd unhook 'em, lower the floor, release the stanchions and open the door to the barnyard, where the sun would be warming things up a bit. Farmer Bob wasn't a factory farmer - these here were free-range toads, 'cept at night when they enjoyed their cozy, heated pens.

Once set in motion, the milking process would take awhile, so Farmer Bob leaned back against the wall and

reaching into his back pocket, pulled out a beat up-looking Motorola cell phone. Unfolding it, he punched in the number to the local collection depot and listened as it rang. After several rings, a voice on the other end answered. It was Dewey Purnell, the

**FARMER BOB
WEREN'T NO
FACTORY
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THESE HERE
WERE**



**FREE-RANGE
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WHEN THEY
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THEIR COZY,
HEATED PENS.**

feller who drove the big stainless steel tank truck.

"You oughta stop by this morning, Dewey," drawled Farmer Bob, "My tank's gettin' near full."

"Sure thing, Bob," answered Dewey. "We've got two other stops to make in your neck of the woods this mornin'. I'll be damned if both Ed Fletcher and Hob Carter didn't call to say they were ready for a tankin' as well. I oughta make it over to your place by eight o'clock or so."

"That sounds fine," replied Farmer Bob, pausing to remove his gimme cap to scratch his head.

"You'll be sure to keep some back for you and the missus, now won't you Bob?"

"Oh, you can bet on that," he laughed, puttin' his cap back on.

"She's got herself a whole shelf of pans dryin' out in the root cellar. Looks like we're gonna have ourselves a good year."

Farmer Bob said goodbye, folded up the phone and stuffed it back into his hip pocket. He stood there for a while, looking out across the line of toads. He knew damned near every one of 'em by name. There, near one end, was Big Pete, his top producer. "What a fine animal," thought Farmer Bob, a proud smile breaking across his weathered face.

He turned and wandered back outside where the sun was just bursting over the east ridge behind the back sixty. The exploding, multi-colored mandalas spinning in his head from the night before were beginning to ease up, allowing a bit of normal reality to creep back in. He took out a small rolled toader from his zippered chest pocket and lipped it, reaching back into a side pocket for his lighter. Giving it a flick, he lit his smoke and crouched down on his haunches, takin' a long drag and staring out across the farm. A flock of birds traced a lazy arc in the brightening sky as the morning sunlight filtered across the frosted meadow. The music flowed out of the barn and danced slowly like shimmering objects in the air around him. Later, he thought, after the tank truck had come, he'd drive on over to the truckstop cafe for a cup o' joe with the neighbors.

Exhaling a thin stream of smoke, he heard the speaker in his wrist telemonitor beep, signaling the end of the milking cycle. Drawing one last puff, he stood up, tossing the butt to the ground and stepping on it. Farmer Bob took another look around before turning to go back inside, admiring the brilliant swirling auras surrounding the dormant peach trees as they stood dreaming in the orchard.

"Yep, there just ain't no other life for me." X

Ward Parkway is a deep cover agent for the NeoWobblies, posing as a Silicon Valley hotshot.

refried brains

Una Noche Loca a Taco Bell



Taco Bell commercials always feature sexy teenagers tearing down a desert highway in a shiny jeep, while 39-cent tostadas dance above them in the sky. But really, a "Run for the Border" usually amounts to an eventless schlep to a gargantuan mall on the outskirts of a dull suburb. Once, in a while, however, chaos smiles at us and lets us laugh at the frightening stupidity of Taco Bell's workforce. This true experience was posted anonymously on the Net. — Mark

■ On my way home from the second job I've taken for extra holiday cash, I stop at Taco Bell for a quick bite. In my billfold is a \$50 bill and a \$2 bill. That is all of the cash I have on my person. I figure that with a \$2 bill, I can get something to eat and not have to worry about people getting pissed at me.

Me: Hi, I'd like one seven layer burrito please, to go.

Taco Bell Grunt: Is that it?

Me: Yep.

TBG: That'll be \$1.04, eat here?

Me: No, it's to go. [I hate effort duplication.]

At his point I open my billfold and hand him the \$2 bill. He looks at it kind of funny and says:

TBG: Uh, hang on a sec, I'll be right back.

He goes to talk to his manager, who is still within earshot. The following conversation occurs between the two of them:

TBG: Hey, you ever see a \$2 bill?

Manager: No. A what?

TBG: A \$2 bill. This guy just gave it to me.

MG: Ask for something else, there's no such thing as a \$2 bill.

TBG: "Yeah, thought so."

He comes back to me and says:

TBG: We don't take these. Do you have anything else?

Me: Just this fifty. You don't take \$2 bills? Why?

TBG: I don't know.

Me: See here where it says legal tender?

TBG: Yeah.

Me: So, shouldn't you take it?

TBG: Well, hang on a sec.

He goes back to his manager who is watch-

ing me like I'm going to shoplift, and says:

TBG: He says I have to take it.

MG: Doesn't he have anything else?

TBG: Yeah, a fifty. I'll get it and you can open the safe and get change.

MG: I'm not opening the safe with him here!

TBG: What should I do?

MG: Tell him to come back later when he has REAL money.

TBG: I can't tell him that, you tell him.

MG: Just tell him.

TBG: No way, this is weird, I'm going in the back.

The manager approaches me and says:

MG: Sorry, we don't take big bills this time of night. [It was 8pm and this particular Taco Bell is in a well-lighted indoor mall with 100 other stores.]

Me: Well, here's a two.

MG: We don't take those either.

Me: Why the hell not?

MG: I think you know why.

Me: No really, tell me, why?

MG: Please leave before I call mall security.

Me: Excuse me?

MG: Please leave before I call mall security.

Me: What the hell for?

MG: Please, sir.

Me: Uh, go ahead, call them.

MG: Would you please just leave?

Me: No.

MG: Fine, have it your way then.

Me: No, that's Burger King, isn't it?

At this point he BACKS away from me and calls mall security on the phone around the corner. I have two people staring at me from the dining area, and I begin laughing out loud, just for effect. A few minutes later this guy in his mid-forties comes in and says [at the other end of counter, in a whisper]:

SG: Yeah, Mike, what's up?

MG: This guy is trying to give me some [pause] funny money.

SG: Really? What?

MG: Get this, a two dollar bill.

SG: Why would a guy fake a \$2 bill? [incredulous]

MG: I don't know? He's kinda weird. Says the only other thing he has is a fifty.

SG: So, the fifty's fake?

MG: NO, the \$2 is.

SG: Why would he fake a \$2 bill?

MG: I don't know. Can you talk to him, and get him out of here?

SG: Yeah...

Security guard walks over to me and says:

SG: Mike here tells me you have some fake bills you're trying to use.

Me: Uh, no.

SG: Lemme see 'em.

Me: Why?

SG: Do you want me to get the cops in here?

At this point I was ready to say, "sure, PLEASE" but I wanted to eat, so I say:

Me: I'm just trying to buy a burrito and pay for it with this \$2 bill.

I put the bill up near his face, and he flinches like I was taking a swing at him. He takes the bill, turns it over a few times in his hands, and says:

SG: Mike, what's wrong with this bill?

MG: It's fake.

SG: It doesn't look fake to me.

MG: But it's a two-dollar bill.

SG: Yeah?

MG: Well, there's no such thing, is there?

The security guard and I both looked at him like he was an idiot, and it dawned on the guy that he had no clue.

My burrito was free and he threw in a small drink and those cinnamon things, too. Makes me want to get a whole stack of \$2 bills just to see what happens when I try to buy stuff. If I got the right group of people, I could probably end up in jail. At least you get free food. ✕

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MILK OF MEN

by Gareth Branwyn

I sit by the phone, a tad nervous. I've heard stories about how Front 242 members can be cagey and distant during media encounters. Tired of reading the same interview with this band (where they get asked some potentially revealing questions, and when they don't answer them head on, the interview ends up with superficial questions like: "Where did your name come from?"), I wanted to go somewhere else, but I wasn't sure where. I decide to wing it.

My cheap Plantronics phone rings and I notice how much its electronic phaser-like rings would make great sound samples in a Front 242 song.

In a clipped, matter-of-fact tone I hear a Belgian accent: "Hello. This is Patrick of Front 242."

boING boING: Hey, Patrick...how's it going!?

Patrick: [hesitates] Fine.

Well, there are no rules on this one, Patrick...the floor is open... what'dya wanna talk about?

We're not going to specially talk about music? OK. [He seems a bit enthused by this.]

Yeah...let's try talking about everything but the music, whatever's behind it, the people, the ideas, the technology, and the art.

Yes. OK.

What, for instance, is Art & Strategy? I've heard that it's some sort of art collective that is attached to 242. It's basically the commercial "arm" of Front 242. That's the way we conceived of it. To give a commercial... ah... vision to what we were doing, our artwork and our music. We have an audio unit and a

visual unit. Art & Strategy is also the "arty" definition of Front 242. We realized that as Front 242 became more popular, it became vulgarized. We wanted to keep some projects apart that were more art-oriented, where we didn't need to have so many people involved, and we were more free.

Is it just members of the band in Art & Strategy, or are there others?

It's basically Daniel [Bressanutti] and myself. Jean-Luc [DeMeyer] is working there also, but just as an accountant [laughs]. We have one employee who is also doing some art projects, here and there.

So, you're producing other bands?

We produced a Belgian band, Jizz and Rawhead. We produced them with Roli Mosimann (Young Gods, Wiseblood, Machines of Loving Grace), and we did their album art. It's almost like we were their management, but very much art-oriented. The other bands are Spill, from New York, and Ether. We've also had exhibitions of Art & Strategy's work in the US and are working up some exhibitions for Europe.

Who does all your computer graphics?

Daniel is the most involved in it. I work with him, but I don't spend much time on



Patrick Codenys & Daniel Bressanutti

those machines anymore. We discuss the ideas together, though. I was very involved in the art on "Tyranny for You," but for the current album ["Up Evil"] we switched from Amigas to Macs. Macs are great. I know a lot about computers, but I don't have time to read all the manuals and everything.

Manuals!? Who the hell reads those!?
Front 242 [laughter]

Well, you have to start somewhere.

You have always stressed the multimedia aspects of what you do... that seems as much who you are as the music. Do you define yourselves as multimedia artists or musicians or ... what?
[thinks for a moment] We have wanted to think of ourselves as multimedia artists, but the times have transformed us... and lately we're mainly music-oriented. We only have enough time to do music and work on the album covers and promotionals. So we try to put much of our art into these.

Do you handle all aspects of promotion and design?

Yes, we do everything.

It's amazing how many fairly popular bands have taken control of all this and now do everything with personal computers.

Yes, I agree. I think this is a very healthy situation. You just arrive at your record

label with a big package that you drop on the desk and say: "Here, distribute this! That's *your* job." We're now doing our own color press sheets, too.

Yes, I have one here and it looks great. Who's the demonic figure with the wireframe horns?

We started out by scanning photographs of gargoyles. We took photos of gargoyles from churches in France and Brussels and we got some images from books. The horns and the rest of the image were done in a 3D program. We spend a lot of time going over each element in our work, thinking about the visual balance, the symbolism, the impact. [laughs] I don't usually find people interested in this sort of thing.

As artists, what type of subject matter intrigues you the most?

Humans. Especially the internal world of human beings. The psychological dimensions. We've had different periods of influence. Ideas have always influenced us more than music... than being a "rock and roll band." Like, on "Official Version," we were interested in exploring the mechanisms of propaganda, media manipulation, and disinformation. On "Tyranny for You," we were interested in symbolism, the power of symbols, and of architecture. We thought architecture was a great balance between the elements of nature (rock, wood, and other materials) and culture (form, function, and so forth). The latest album is very different in that it is very much musically influenced... music that is coming from the United States... that we are very inspired by. On "Tyranny," and the other albums, we looked through lots of books on design for ideas. On this album... I've never listened to so many CDs [laughs].

What about hip-hop/rap music?

Yes, we have always been interested in that, especially several years ago. It was amazing to me that someone could get a record on the charts just using a rhythm box and voice. Rap is not as heavily controlled as what we do in Front 242, but it is, in essence, the same thing. It's about people taking control

of their music and their message and not having to go through the normal channels. We've always had a strong opposition to the music business. Here in Belgium, we always have to fight the system, the music business, for anything we want. I think the sentiment of rap/hip-hop is "you can make it by going outside that system."

Religion and the nature of evil seem to

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HAPPENING AROUND US AND WE
MAKE A MIRROR OUT OF THAT AND
WE HOLD THAT UP IN PEOPLE'S
FACES AND SAY 'HEY, LOOK AT THIS
— THIS IS YOU.'"**

be the guiding concepts on your latest record. How did that come about?

As we've gotten more into exploring the internal worlds of people, we've, of course, encountered numerous dualities. Oppositions... good and evil... recognizing that in each of us there is a normal person and a killer... all those internal contradictions. We speak of religion because that is one of the strongest systems of rules that runs through most people's lives, and their education, and they just follow it. At some point, you come up against your instincts in opposition to those rules. And it's not just religion... we could say philosophy, or society, and so forth.

I've heard Front 242 described as "audio/video journalists," that you simply take what's floating around and feed it through your music. This fits in with a common notion that "art is a mirror," simply reflecting society. There's another saying: "Art is not a mirror, art is a hammer." So, which one is it?

[laughs. sighs.] I have no problem with the mirror or the hammer, but maybe I have a big problem with the art. [more

laughter] What we do is we take the things that we see happening around us and we make a mirror out of that and we hold that up in people's faces and we say..."hey, look at this... THIS is you." Have you ever tried looking at yourself in a mirror for any length of time?

Yes, I have... and it's very unnerving.

Exactly. You freak out! It's an interesting experience for people to try. We try to do that in our work. So... maybe your statement is true... and it's just that Front 242 doesn't make art... we do something else.

I think that what the statement implies is that art is not just a passive reflection, that it can be very active and aggressive.

Yes... you can always use the mirror as a hammer. [laughs]

Is Front 242 interested in "changing things"? Are you trying to hold up that mirror so that people will see things in some revealing way... so that they'll want to change what they see?

Yes, I definitely think so.

Do you have a Front 242 manifesto... some codifying statement or concept of what you all are about?

[uncomfortable laughter] That's a VERY vicious question. If pressed for an answer, I would say that the message of Front 242 is: 1) Don't you see what's going on?, and 2) Don't you see that the only answer to our problems is collective suicide! [hearty laughter] Or something like that. I think that's very close to the truth, but I don't want to sound like a wacko.

Is that all? There's got to be a flip side to that.

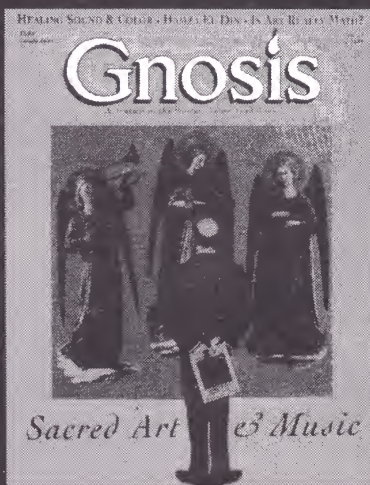
Sure. I'm personally balanced over this huge feeling of humanism, of believing in the human race, and at the same time, as an extreme person, I have the totally opposite feeling... that humans are just rats on this Earth, or something like that. All these contradictions come up. ✕



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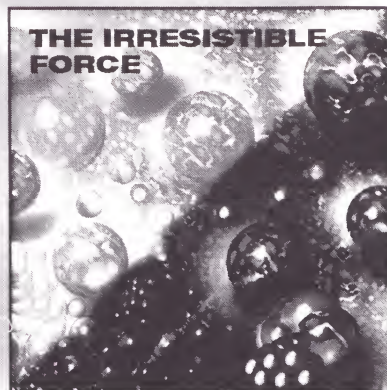
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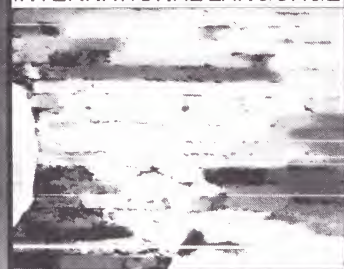
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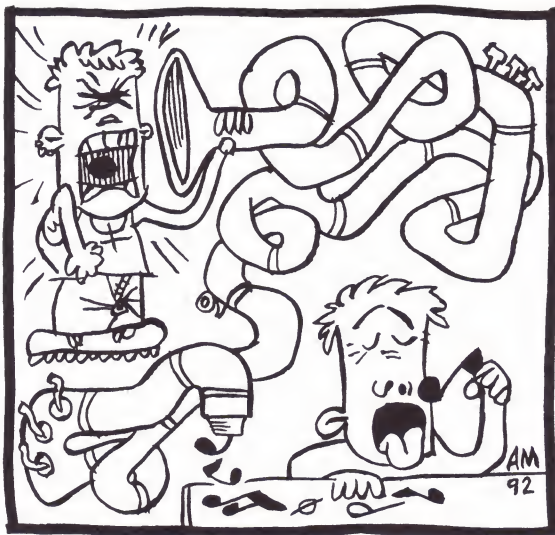


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AUDIBLE SIGNALS

Probe: "Mission USA" (Tommy Boy)

■ If you'd like to listen to a Casio lounge band composed of four Gregorian chanters on valium sampling *Star Trek Classic* sound effects (which would actually sound much cooler than this disc could ever hope to be) then run out now and pick up Probe's *Mission USA*. Probe — having lost any semblance of human passion and excitement — represents the flipside of the initial excitement house music once stood for. Probe is like the skeletal remains that some rave casualities have become: barren, angst ridden, repetitive, and boring. Another case of the bland leading the bland. [Ren Moulton]

KMFDM: "Angst" (Wax Trax/TVT Records)

■ KMFDM play with a distinctly metallic tint. On most of the tracks, notably "Light" and "A Hole In The Wall", the guitars lay down a heavy backbone upon which the stories of alienation, betrayal, sexual desire and brotherhood can sit. But it's not all guitars. As lead singer Konietzko howls in Sucks: "Our music is sampled, totally fake. It's done by machine 'cause they don't make mistakes."

KMFDM are loud, heavy, fast, and tight; they also manage to remain interesting and relevant. [John Ferguson]

Squeeze: "Some Fantastic Place" (ASM)

■ *Some Fantastic Place* takes me back to the early eighties when British pop was God of the airwaves. Filled with snappy beats and quirky love songs, this album is pure pop and pure Squeeze.

They deliver their patented harmonies in songs like "Talk to Him" where the beautiful blending of voices gives an otherwise unremarkable song a first class rating.

Unusual for the band is the horn section in "Loving You Tonight". This sexy song whose brass accompaniments, harmonies and vocals from Paul Carrack's (who is reunited with Squeeze after more than a decade), sultry, come fuck me voice, give the tune an R&B feel.

All the lyrics on the album pertain to love. Either they are looking for it, losing it, groovin' on the feeling, or bemoaning rejection. Their finest moment comes on the album's final song, "Pinnochio," a ballad that keeps pace with all the bursts and swoons of being in love. [Julie Fishman]

Moby: "Move" (Elektra)

■ If you want something new and fresh, and are not discouraged by big labels (Elektra) or old names (Moby) then you might want to check out the new Moby EP, titled *Move*, a garagy sounding album with wonderful female vocals and soulful collages of assorted sound textures. "You Make Me Feel" could be a candidate for the first top forty rave song, with its catchy melody and amped soul singing, but it still pumps out at about a hundred and twenty beats a minute. Much of the EP is your basic straight up sweat-spewing rave music, but the last song, "The Rain Falls and the Sky Shudders" (apart from its over reaching psuedo-poetic title) lives up to the moniker of "post-rave." It's a techno ambient music piece with rain samples and piano. It sounds cheesy, but Moby pulls it off. [Ren Moulton]

Future Sound of London: "Cascade" (Virgin UK)

■ After revolutionizing the electronic dance world with their dreamy progressive-house hit "Papua New Guinea," Future Sound of London has turned to more mellow and pensive pursuits with their new EP, *Cascade*, featuring both a 30-minute and a condensed, 5-minute version of the same piece: a strange journey through a watery electronic wonderland. The music ranges from ambient to mid-tempo, mixing layers of cool piano and flute melodies, and house beats of varying intensity with tweaked synthesized noises and sounds that, though unmistakably artificial, conjure up images of water, birds and human voices. At some points *Cascade* strays a bit too close to New Age Hell for my liking, but in general its psychedelic weirdness and organic imagery keeps it sounding undeniably modern. In sum, excellent listening music. [Jessica Wing]

Various Artists: "Transmitting from Heaven" (Exist Dance)

■ All six "bands" featured on *Transmitting from Heaven* are actually aliases for the same people, but the music varies so widely that you'd never know it. The people behind the compilation are the guys who run Exist Dance Records, source of some of the best underground dance music around. The tracks include tribal, acid trance, and ambient songs, all done very well. Although the bulk of the compilation is dance music, the real highlights are the songs put out under the name Tranquillity Bass. They are a mixture of world music, gentle funk rhythms and, of all things, baby noises. Another highlight is a track under the name "Tylervision" that I can only describe as psychedelic cowboy music — it must be heard to be believed. The compilation will serve well as either an introduction to some of the most cutting-edge strains of underground electronic dance music or as an opportunity to collect all the Exist Dance 12-inch releases in one place. [Jessica Wing] X

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Emigre (from 19)

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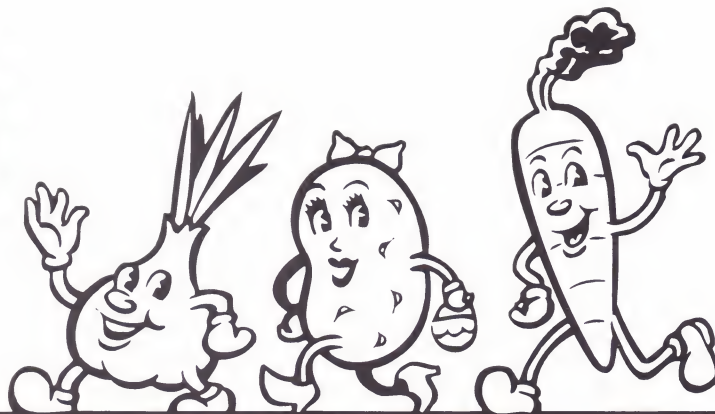
The role that the computer plays in *Emigre's* designs has changed dramatically since 1983. In the magazine's earliest days, the Mac, and hence the whole field of desktop publishing, was still in its infancy. The selection of fonts available to the desktop designer was extremely limited — so limited, in fact, that VanderLans and Licko were compelled to design their own, and thus *Emigre's* font foundry was born. But the technology available to VanderLans and Licko was primitive, and there was no way to hide it. So they didn't try to. The early *Emigre* designs and fonts are a celebration of low-tech. Bit-mapped MacPaint graphics and bit-mapped type, blown up to almost comic proportions, were an important part of the early *Emigre* aesthetic, as was more obvious Mac imagery like mouse pointers, menu fragments, scroll bars, etc.

However, while *Emigre* continues to push the available hardware and software (not to mention its margins) to their limits, VanderLans is now less compelled to wear his technology on his sleeve. The computer's role in *Emigre's* production is as important as ever, but as the Mac has advanced from the bit-mapped stage to its current level of sophistication, it has become a tool no different from pen and ink or pasteboard. And how does VanderLans feel about this? "I'm glad it's becoming a little more invisible." Which is the one thing *Emigre's* type will never be. (This article was set in *Emigre's* Journal typeface.) ✕

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Here's an interesting story: a couple of months ago, somewhere in the flat, middle part of the United States, a farmer fertilized his crops with pig manure. He wasn't an honest farmer, because he mixed his pigs' feed with paper to fatten them up for market. Yes, we know: times are tight for farmers, and John Mellencamp hasn't played a benefit concert for our leathernecked tillers of the soil for some time, but gosh darnit – it just isn't right to feed paper to pigs. First of all, it plays havoc on the porcine digestive system, and second of all, paper waste often contains chemicals that are toxic to the pigs, as well as to the humans who feast upon the flesh of the slaughtered animals.

If this was all there was to the story, it'd end right here, leaving a bunch of white space on the page. But there's more. You see, these pigs were fed ground up copies of *boING boING*. How did that happen?

Well, a clerk, employed by one of our distributors, was preparing a shipment to a dry goods store in one of those prairie towns in the flat, middle part of the country. She entered the letters "BO" in the database, expecting to bring up the scheduling information for *Boar World Monthly*, a magazine for pig farmers. But *BWM* had recently changed its name to *It's a Sow's World After All*, and the clerk had never been told of the change. She had been working at the company for such a long time that she was extremely robotic in performing her duties. When "boING boING" popped up on the screen, she didn't even look at the title, she just entered an order for 500 copies of the magazine and pushed the little button that would make it all happen.

Needless to say, once the magazine made it to the dry goods store and was placed on the rack, nobody bought it, except for the kid who built that wicked half pipe behind the grain silo, and a mysterious "hydroponics" farmer who had an abnormally high electric bill. The other 498 copies just took up space in the store. Since the proprietor didn't order the magazines, he decided to teach the distributor a lesson so they wouldn't be as careless the next time. He called his brother (the dishonest pig farmer), who came by and loaded his truck with the remaining 498 copies of *boING boING*.

So now you have the background information. Now we are at the part where the farmer has plowed his pigs' waste into the crops. This is where the story really takes off.

The vegetables that were growing in the ground absorbed the information in *boING boING*. Even after the magazines were shredded and mixed with pig slop; even after they had been masticated and swallowed by the pigs; even after they had passed through the pigs' digestive systems; and even after they had been plowed into the ground; the ideas expressed in *boING boING* were too strong to be destroyed.

Three of the vegetables (see above) were so impressed with what they had absorbed, that they dug themselves out of the ground and began a harrowing trek to *boING boING* headquarters in order to meet the editors. This incredible journey is a great story (example: narrow escapes from marauding bands of famished hobos) but now we are running out of room so before I have to reduce the point size of the font again, I better wrap it up. The vegetables eventually made it to San Francisco and asked for T-shirts. I told them we didn't have any that would fit them, and they were BUMMED. But I promised them if we get 500 orders from this ad, I'll give them custom-made shirts. They are very excited (see above). The ball's in your court now!✕



Dear *boING boING*: I never thought I'd be ordering one of your T-shirts with Kata Sutra on it, but your story made me feel guilty. The only way I can alleviate my bad feelings is by ordering a 100% cotton shirt and doing my part to clothe the vegetables.

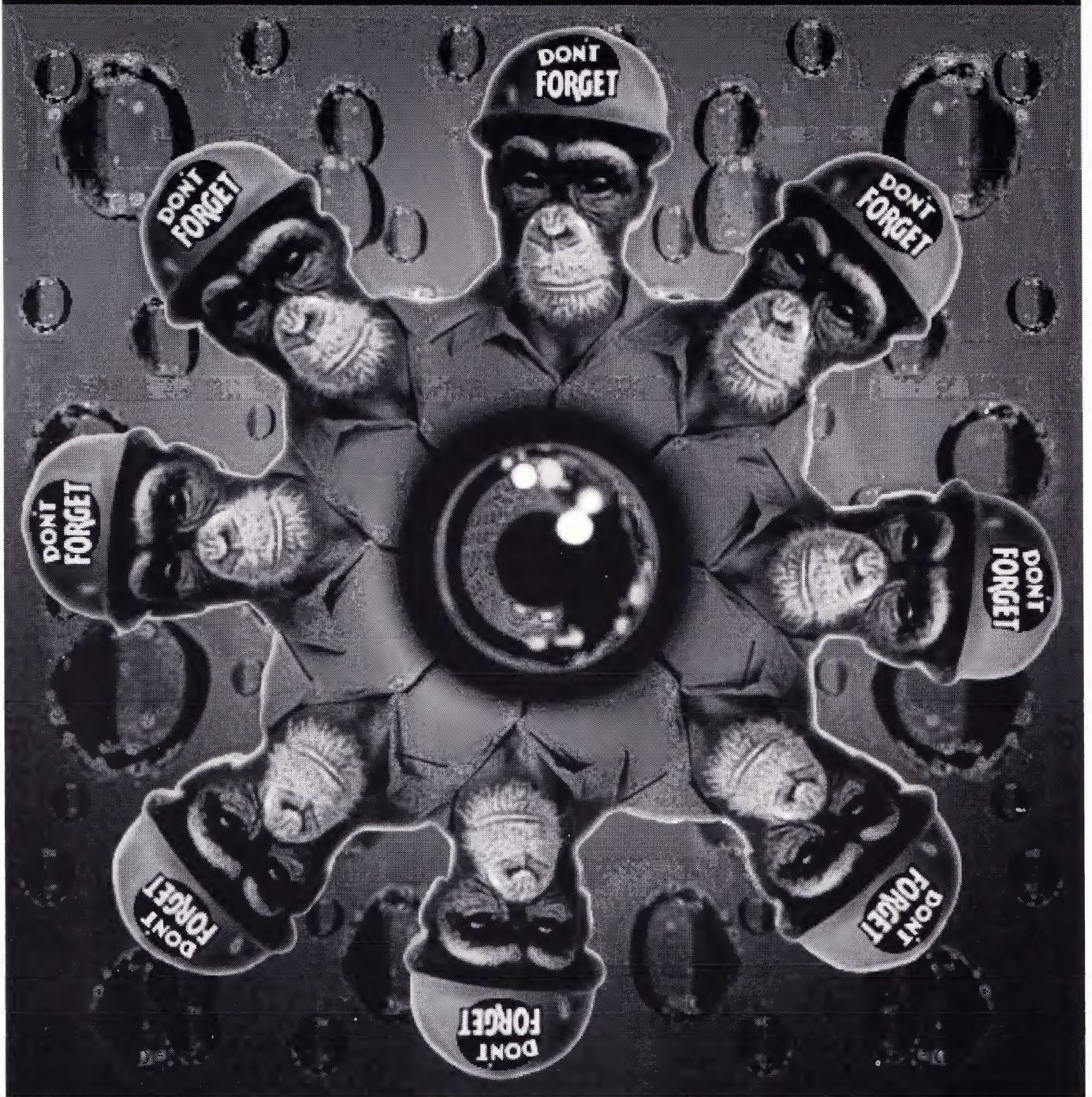
	Large	XLarge	Each	Total
White shirt, black ink:	_____	_____	\$12	_____
Black shirt, glo-in-dark ink:	_____	_____	\$18	_____
California sales tax			8.25%	_____
Shipping (per shirt)			\$1	_____
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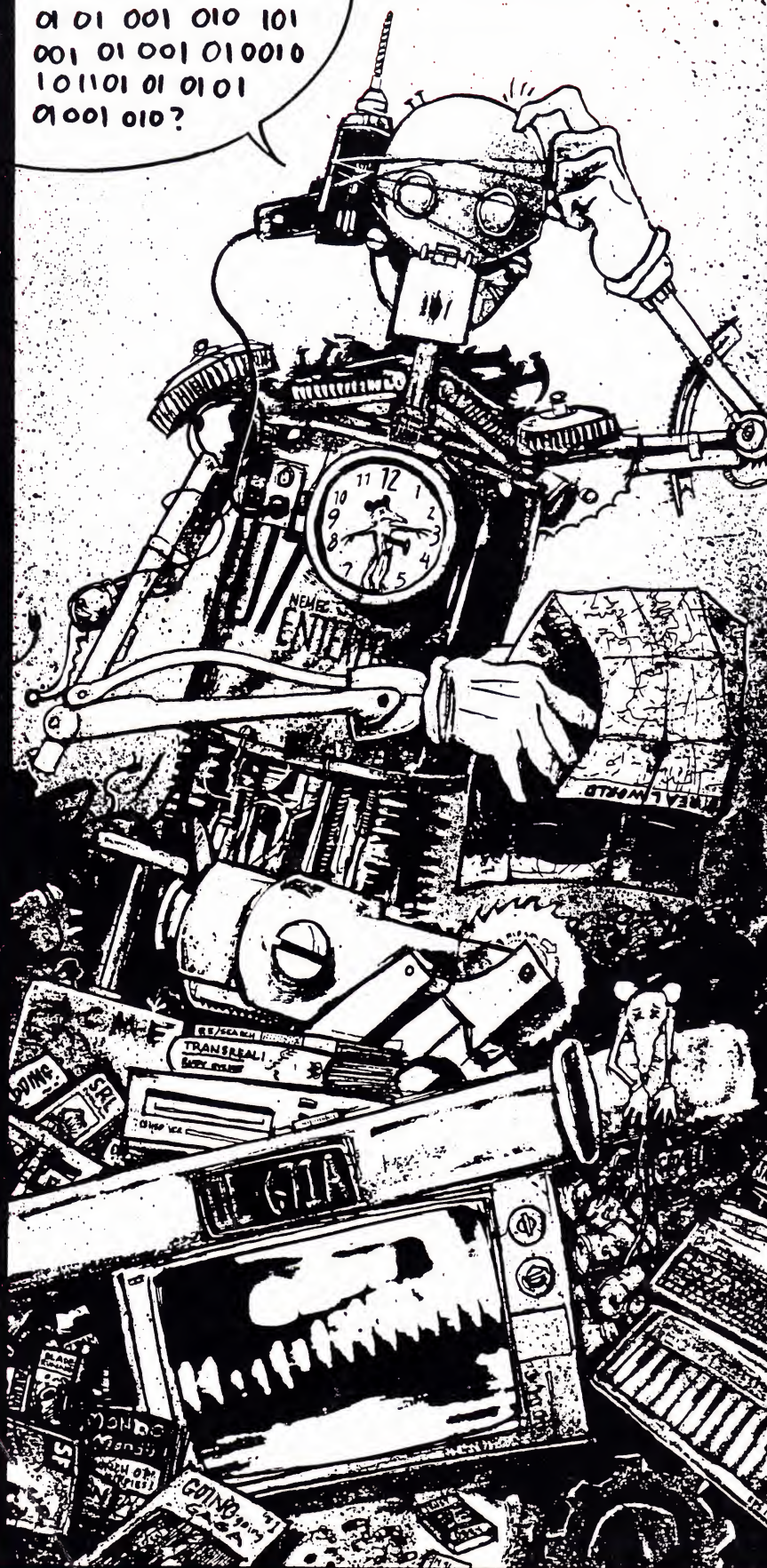
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